

STECHER

AM  
cher  
1931  
st





Boston University

Graduate School

Thesis

The Development of Imperial Federation  
1917--1926

Submitted by

Constance Field Stecher  
A.B., Boston University, 1926

In partial fulfillment of requirements for  
the degree of Master of Arts

1931

BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
LIBRARY

524.

46995

upstairs  
378.744  
BO  
A.M. 1931  
st

The Delopment of Imperial Federation  
(1917---1926)

1. Introduction:

- A. Nature of the British Empire
- B. Colonial Conference 1887--1911
- C. The Interim 1911--1917
- D. General Survey 1917--1926.

2. Body:

A. Survey of Imperial Resolutions

Aa. Dominion Status

B. Imperial Communications

- 1. Air, Telephony, Telegraph, Shipping
- 2. Imperial Statistics
- 3. Imperial News Service
- 4. Imperial Parcels Delivery
- 5. Empire Patent
- 6. National War Museum
- 7. Dominion House
- 8. Imperial Defence

C. Treaties and Foreign Policy

D. Irish Free State



E. British Policy in India

F. Economic Policies

1. Imperial Resources
2. Imperial Research
3. Imperial Preference
4. Double Income Tax

G. Other Imperial Questions

1. Imperial War Graves Commission
2. Emigration
3. Naturalization

3. Summary

4. Some General Conclusions.

---

---





# The Development of Imperial Federation

(1917--1926)

## 1. Introduction

### A. Nature of the British Empire:

The "British Commonwealth of Nations" is the outgrowth of an evolutionary process. It is futile to attempt to divide British Colonial History into other than arbitrary periods. A recent division is that of Professor Zimmern who says that "the first Empire was a Colonial Empire of the older type abruptly extinguished in 1776. The second British Empire reached the culmination of its power and development in the Great War. Now the Third British Empire has evolved, new in form, conditions, and name. The British Empire of 1914 has now become "The British Commonwealth of Nations."<sup>1</sup>

It is the British Constitution which binds together the varied and extensive elements<sup>2</sup> of the Empire. In its broadest aspect the British Constitution is monarchical and parliamentary; and these two features apply to every part of the British Empire.

---

1 A.E. Zimmern, "The Third Empire." Pages 15--17.

2 British Colonies, Protectorates, Mandates, and self-governing Dominions.



It includes both Monarchy and Parliament because royal authority applies throughout every one of the British possessions and all government acts made expressly and directly, or indirectly, under the authority of Parliament are subject to the supervision and ultimate control of Parliament. It is because the functions of government are exercised by the Ministry that is said that "the King reigns but does not govern;" he is the embodiment of the formal constitution.

As for the constitution of the self-governing Dominions, it is to be noted that in every case the right to representative government has been granted by an act of Parliament or by an Order in Council. It is well known that responsible government is a recent institution in British history, an institution which did not come into existence in England itself until late in the seventeenth century and a principle which was made more effective in form as a result of the loss of the American Colonies. The first measure in responsible government in the Colonies came in the Act of 1791 which granted to Canada a division into upper and lower Canada, with separate legislatures. This provision formed the model for subsequent representative institutions in other colonies and still remains the



basis of Parliamentary institutions in the Dominions, with few exceptions.

The interval between 1847 and 1922 marks the period during which the Dominions were granted responsible government, and in many instances the allowance took place where the territory and population was at that time relatively small. But in most cases this growth of responsible government simply meant the attachment of a Cabinet system to an already existing Parliamentary system.

The next stage in the growth of responsible government was the union of certain groups by the creation of one central government and legislature having power to deal with affairs of common interest, three of which groups: Canada, Australia, and South Africa, are most prominent by statutory authority.<sup>3</sup> But the general body of constitutional law in the Dominions, as in Great Britain, is subject to a gradual change even if there is not so much scope and freedom for alteration as exists under the non-statutory British Constitution. Though the Dominions owe their constitutional and legislative grants to the British Parliament, and their Parliaments

---

#3 A.L. Lowell, D. Hall, "The British Commonwealth." p. 593 Dominion of Canada, British North America Act 1867, Commonwealth of Australia, Constitutional Act 1900, Union of So. Africa, So. Africa Act 1909, New Zealand, Constitution-Act, 1852. Newfoundland admitted to the Imperial Conferences as "technically a colony rather than a dominion."





Cannot pass legislation in conflict with that of the  
<sup>4</sup>  
 British Parliament and are thus termed "subordinate,"  
 it is doubtful whether this description still holds  
 in view of recent developments in regard to States.

B. Colonial Conference 1887-1911:

Prior to the World War no part of the Empire, outside of the British Isles, could be regarded as self-governing so far as foreign affairs were concerned for the very reason that foreign policy was in the hands of a Cabinet member in London who was answerable only to the British Parliament. But owing to the need for greater cooperation between the self-governing colonies and Great Britain, efforts were put forth by the Imperial Government at Westminster to secure the assistance of the self-governing Dominions; for this reason the consequent scheme for Imperial Federation was essentially British. The Imperial Federation League was founded in 1884<sup>5</sup> and branches were presently established in the colonies. The Canadian branch was strenuously opposed to the participation of Canada in such an Imperial Federation and tended to develop the country along the lines of Imperial

---

4. Colonial Laws Validity Act, 1865.

5. W.E. Foster, the founder was succeeded by Lord Roseberry in 1886. Upon resignation, Lord Roseberry was succeeded by Lord Stanhope in 1892.



Preference. As a result the Imperial Government at London felt it desirable to call a conference of Empire delegates to consider such matters as defence and international intercourse between the various parts of the Empire. The first Colonial Conference assembled in 1887 and was representative of all parts of the Empire, including the Crown Colonies. The Conference was concerned chiefly with military and economic matters such as defence, Empire customs, commercial treaty powers, and a change in the Royal Title to include the colonies.

The Imperial Federation League was pleased at the progress made and anticipated further conferences, though no definite scheme was outlined at the time until Lord Salisbury was urged to call a Conference in June, 1891 to consider the share by the different parts of the Empire of common privileges and responsibilities. At this time statesmen demanded a definite plan, but nothing of any importance was accomplished and the Federation movement was formally dissolved in 1893.

The failure of the Federation project to solve Empire problems was immediately followed by a





definite movement toward Imperial Preference which was very clearly stated at the second Colonial Conference at Ottawa in 1894. All the former self-governing Dominions were represented with a addition of delegates from Australia and South Africa. Matters of commercial agreements and preferences interest, and a proposed cable between Canada and Australia was considered.

The Conference of 1897 voiced its satisfaction with the existing relations between Great Britain and her colonies. A desire was also expressed for the continuance of the conferences. Matters of foreign relations, immigration, penny postage and the Pacific Cable were discussed.

For the first time in history the Conference of 1902 was placed on a definite basis. The representatives agreed that meetings should be held at regular intervals not exceeding four years; that colonies should be consulted before the negotiation of commercial treaties; that there should be an increase of colonial grants for naval subsidies; that trade preferences should be established within the Empire. Such minor matters were considered as



weights and measures, patents, reduced rates on cables, postage, and news.

The next Conference assembled in 1907, rather than in 1906, owing to political changes which were taking place in Great Britain. As a result of proposals and discussions the Conference was renamed the "Imperial Conference." It was also agreed that ministers of other than self-governing Dominions might attend the conferences but that the ballot be confined to the Dominions and Great Britain, each being entitled to one vote. The chief constitutional issue undertaken was relative to the establishment of an Imperial Court of Appeal to merge the House of Lords and the Judicial Committee, but the matter was negatived by the British Government. Uniformity of treaty regulations and consideration of Imperial Preference were mentioned.

The climax of the series of Conferences which began in 1887 came with the Conference held in 1911 as this meeting concludes the first stage in the growth of a system of consultation<sup>of</sup> all parts of the Empire. The idea of an Imperial Parliament was disregarded and nothing of further importance was accomplished regarding the matter of an Imperial Court of Appeal.



Important achievements were realized in matters of naturalization and foreign relations. The Indian question and the status of Dominion navies were carefully considered, and the question of emigration was also explored. Commercial and economic matters received attention, as well as legal questions.

C. The Interim 1911-1917:

Owing to the outbreak of the World War in 1914 no Imperial Conference was held in 1915; but in 1917 and 1918, the Conference was called the "Imperial War Conference" and was held under the chairmanship of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. This foreshadowed great changes in Imperial relations; but the arrangement was only temporary and ended with the war.

The Imperial Conference may be said to have become a continuing institution, but its permanence is a matter for the future to decide; the probability being that the institution may in time either change into something entirely different, or acquire additional characteristics. The most outstanding permanent feature of these meetings was the free and frank discussion of Imperial problems which carried with it a





growing consciousness of each Dominion as a unit with a certain freedom of action regarding its own affairs which came, in the course of time, to be a recognized principle without the passing of any laws to give it formal expression. As time passed certain measures became established practice and as a result it became clear that the self-governing Dominions were unwilling to allow any interference from the Home Government regarding internal affairs, though no definite stand was taken on this matter until 1926. Some were of the opinion that the time had come for the establishment of some definite principles regarding the relations between the Mother Country and the Dominions; Others seemed to feel that this was the propitious time for a formal expression of constitutional relations on the part of the Dominions. These opinions were naturally voiced upon the occasion of the participation of the Dominions in the Great War which afforded an opportunity for the testing of Empire solidarity and strength.

The entrance of the Dominions in the late World War was the supreme occasion for the recognition of the part they played in that war, and of their right



to be consulted in affairs affecting them, both from an Imperial and from an international point of view. Because of India's participation, though not a self-governing Dominion, it was felt that she, too, should be given an equal voice. Consequently it was evident that, owing to war conditions, a new series of Conferences between the Dominions began in 1917.

D. General Survey 1917-1926:

The Dominions spontaneously accepted the war begun by Great Britain; but there was a feeling in the Dominions that inasmuch as they were members of the British Group, they should share in the administration of the Empire. To quote Mr. C. J. Doherty of Canada:

"The hand that wields the sword of the Empire justly holds the sceptre of the Empire; while the Mother Country alone wielded the one, to her alone belonged the other. When, as today, the nations of the Empire join in wielding the sword, then must they jointly sway the <sup>6</sup>sceptre."

The early stages of the war revealed the clumsiness of the British Cabinet as an effective war executive; consequently in 1916 Mr. Lloyd George established an inner





cabinet of five men to decide on vital problems of the war. Telegrams were sent to the Dominions inviting the Prime Ministers to attend the meetings of the War Cabinet; and India was included in the invitation. In this way the first Imperial War<sup>7</sup> Cabinet ever assembled in the Empire met in 1917.

With the exception of Australia, the Prime Minister of Great Britain and all the self-governing Dominions, Indian representatives, and a group of experts, met to discuss the prosecution of the war, conditions of peace, and post-war problems.

The meetings were held at the Colonial Office on various dates between March 21 and April 27, 1917, and were divided into two parts: (1) the meetings with the British War Cabinet; (2) a series of meetings of the Imperial War Conference for the discussion of less urgent issues and questions related to the war. The Imperial War Cabinet met alternately to discuss critical matters, while the Imperial War Conference discussed non-military items of Dominion interest. Each Government was entitled to one vote, though all representatives

---

6. Quotation on page 10. A.B.Keith, "Responsible Government." Page 198.

7. The British War Cabinet with the addition of Overseas representatives.



had a right to speak. At the last meeting of the Cabinet it was suggested by Mr. Lloyd George that such meetings become "an accepted convention of the British Constitution." In this way the Colonial Conference became an Imperial Cabinet meeting annually. Owing to the very confidential nature of the Conference business, only a small part of the proceedings were considered suitable for publication.

In June, 1918, the Imperial War Cabinet met a second time because of the crisis of the fate of the Allies. All the Dominions were represented, and India had, beside her Secretary of State, Mr. Sinha as a popular representative, and the Maharajah of Patiala acting in behalf of her princes. Two important resolutions were reached: (1) that Dominion Prime <sup>Ministers</sup> were to have direct communication with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom on cabinet matters; (2) that the Prime Ministers of the Dominion were to have the right to **nominate** a representative to act in their absence at the meetings of the Imperial Cabinet in London. As in 1917, there were held, alternately with those of the Cabinet, meetings of the Conference under the presidency of the Secretary of State, on various dates between June 12, and July 26, 1918. Great Britain, Canada, New



Zealand, South Africa, Newfoundland, and India were represented, and many experts attended.

The same Conference procedure was adopted as in 1917 regarding arrangements of meetings, discussions and voting, but the issue of a more detailed report of the Conference proceedings was suggested by Sir Robert Borden of Canada. However, only such parts of the Discussion and papers as were not of confidential character were published. Important resolutions were passed as a result of discussions concerning such major questions as emigration, Imperial relations, economic matters and the Indian question.

In January, 1919 the Imperial War Conference proceeded to Paris, as the British Empire delegation, to enter upon peace negotiations.

The Imperial Conference of 1921 was largely occupied with the issues of the Japanese Alliance which had been renewed in 1911 for a period of ten years. To clarify the situation concerning difficulties which had since arisen as to the renewal of the alliance, the Conference met from June 20, until August 5, 1921 as a regular Imperial Conference with full representation of the Dominions and India. Thirty-four plenary sessions took place, eleven





meetings of Prime Ministers, and eight meetings of the committees. Resolutions were agreed upon which proved of moderate importance; but very valuable decisions concerning Foreign affairs and defence have been kept secret.

A meeting in 1922 was deemed impossible because of the general election being held in Australia and New Zealand, but the Conference met from October 1 to November 8, 1923. All the Dominions and India were represented by their numerous ministers and secretariats. The Irish Free State was represented for the first time.<sup>8</sup> In addition to the meetings of the full Conference there were eleven meetings of Committees, and technical discussions on Defence Questions at the Admiralty and Air Ministry.<sup>9</sup> Imperial relations were discussed at great length and important resolutions passed with reference to such matters. Economic questions were turned over to an Economic Conference whose work was of more importance than that of the regular Conference. The question of the necessity of publicity was approved but the accounts of the deliberations were unsatisfactory.

In 1924 it was suggested that, as a preliminary to a possible Conference, a meeting of experts

---

8. Prof. John Mac Neil, Minister of Education.

9. Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald, Minister of External Affairs.

9. Cmd 1987, 1923, page 4.



be held to consider a more effective exchange of views. Approval was voiced by some members, which Canada rejected. But the fall of the Labor Government in Great Britain terminated the scheme. The Imperial Government attempted to summons a Conference in March, 1925 to consider the Geneva Protocol for the pacific settlement of international disputes, but the meeting was finally arranged for October, 1926.

The Imperial Conference met from October 19, to November 23, 1926 with the full representation of all Dominions. During this period sixteen plenary sessions took place. The idea of having two distinct Conferences was abandoned and the useful innovation was made in delegating any minor issues needing detailed consideration to sub-committees of experts to report on at the Conference sessions. One hundred forty-six such committee meetings were held and technical discussions of Defence matters at the Admiralty, War Office, and Air Ministry. A meeting of the Imperial Defence Committee was attended by all Prime Ministers; many matters were delegated to a technical sub-committee which also held one meeting.<sup>10</sup> The most important committee appointed was that on Inter-Imperial Relations under the chairmanship of Mr. Balfour. Little has

---

10. Cmd 2786, 1926, page 10.





been given to the public for such matters as Defence, Empire policy, and the Egyptian situation were kept secret. Little of real value was accomplished outside of the report of the Inter-Imperial Relations Committee. However certain valuable progress was made in the exchange of ideas between the statesmen of the Empire. The Report is merely a part of the summary of proceedings of the Imperial Conference of 1926. It deals with the negative side of ~~the~~ National States and only with relations between self-governing nations of the British Empire, and only with such parts of those relations that required alteration.

The Imperial Conference which met in 1930 accomplished little in the realm of responsible Government. The Conference was primarily a gathering of Dominion representatives for the discussion of economic considerations by which the British Commonwealth of Nations might attain a closer union. The question of Indian status presented itself and occupied the close attention of the Dominion representatives. No definite offer of Dominion status was made to India as a result of discussion which took place at this Imperial Conference. The question of Imperial Preference was again



discussed, but no practical results are to be witnessed. Important discussions took place on such issues as Imperial defence, Imperial communications, research and emigration. Suggestions were offered by the delegates along similar lines to those adopted at previous Imperial Conferences. It can be truthfully said that little of importance was definitely concluded on any of the major issues.

## 11      Detailed Survey of Imperial Resolutions:

No one <sup>can</sup> for a moment deny that the Imperial Conference, as an institution of Empire has accomplished a very lasting and valuable work during the several meetings since 1917 in its endeavours to establish successfully a mutual understanding between Great Britain and her Dominions with regard to Imperial matters.

My purpose is to discuss the important Conference Resolutions which were passed between 1917 and 1926 as evidence of such Imperial progress. In so doing I shall present a reasonably complete survey of each of the major topics separately, including the discussions at each Conference of the particular topic at hand.



### A. Dominion Status

As we have heretofore noted, Imperial Federation was essentially a British view which enlisted little support in the colonies. On the other hand, the movement for autonomy is essentially a Dominion view which has received popular support of different degrees in the Dominions owing to various causes. No real support for **this** movement is to be found in New Zealand and Newfoundland for the obvious reason that a small population is not sufficient to defend New Zealand unless she has the support of a great sea power; and Newfoundland is firmly British owing to her necessary dependence upon British naval protection.

The position of the Irish Free State is largely dictated by her commercial dependence upon the United Kingdom and therefore her desire for independence is not acute. In South Africa the difficulty is one of Nationalism; while India is dependent upon Britain to keep order within and without. In Canada the movement for independence is voiced by a comparatively small group for there is not a great deal for Canada to gain by independence because, as a member of the British group, she enjoys protection under the Monroe Doctrine, membership in the League, and the privilege of maintaining a diplomatic representative at





Washington.

The fundamental difficulty underlying the movement for independence is the sense of Nationhood. Canada is not ready for independence and neither is she prepared for a system of effective Imperial Cooperation; therefore her status is unsatisfactory. Australia needs protection; therefore there is no stress for true independence, even though republicanism seemed strong in 1918. Closer consultation has been encouraged by the Imperial Government in an endeavour to make the Dominions feel more secure. The result of this movement for independence seems to be the creation of a British League of Commonwealths, each commonwealth independent but concluding among themselves certain agreements subject to the League. And even though the present condition seems somewhat uncertain, we can see, upon close examination, a slow but very definite capacity of growth which indicates progress.

The history of self-government in the colonies and of their relation to Great Britain can better be traced in the case of Canada for she has become the pattern for all others. Several Colonial Conferences were held in Canada for common interests from 1887 on; and by 1907 they became more important and were transferred to London. During this time Canada had been asking for a greater degree of autonomy



which had always been granted when the demand appeared serious. In this way, because Canada could obtain anything she desired; her connection with the Mother Country was determined by the progressive wishes of the colony which preferred to be called a dominion. The late war showed the willingness of the members of the British Empire to cooperate, and, at the same time tended toward the development of a stronger sense of nationality.

This fact is best seen in the famous constitutional resolution of 1917, which was moved by Sir Robert Borden of Canada and adopted by the Conference; "That any readjustment of constitutional relations while thoroughly preserving all existing powers of self-government and complete control of domestic affairs be based upon recognition of the Dominions as autonomous nations of an Imperial Commonwealth, and of India as an important portion of the same; should recognize the right of the Dominions and India to an adequate voice in foreign policy and in foreign relations; and should provide effective arrangements for continuous consultation on all important matters of common Imperial concern, and for such necessary concerted action, founded on consultation, as the several governments may determine."<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Cd 8566, 1917, page 61.



The Resolution places on record the view that any re-adjustment of relations must preserve all existing powers of self-government and control of domestic matters and must be based on a complete recognition of the Dominions as autonomous nations within an Imperial Commonwealth with the right to a voice in foreign policy and foreign relations.

The Dominions have been referred to in various ways. General Smuts mentioned them as members of the "Britannic League" with a status of international recognition. Lord Milner spoke of the United Kingdom and the Dominions as partner nations for good, and all of equal status. During the course of a debate in the South African House General Smuts stated: "We have received a position of absolute equality and freedom, not only among other states of the Empire, but among the nations of the World."

In reply Mr. Ross, of the opposition, said that ~~nothing~~ nothing had happened to change the relations of the different Dominions to the United Kingdom and that all these high sounding phrases are meaningless. Nathan<sup>12</sup> mentions these very illustrations to show that some authoritative

---

12. M. Nathan, " Empire Government," chapter 1.





declaration on the matter of status was absolutely necessary

At the Imperial Conference of 1918 Mr. Hughes cited in detail the history of the discussion on the matter of an Imperial Court of Appeal for the entire Empire, whereon Dominion as well as British judges should be qualified and made eligible to sit, and to which all appellants of the Empire should have recourse. He has intimated rather emphatically that the present system of appeal is unsatisfactory to the Dominions because of two existent Courts of Appeal, the House of Lords for England, and the Judicial Committee for British Possessions abroad; because the decisions of the Judicial Committee are not binding on the House of Lords;<sup>13</sup> and because this Committee is not Imperial in its membership, Mr Hughes moved a resolution to this effect, but owing to the approval by Canada of the present situation on the ground that the present tendency seems to be to restrict rather than to increase the number of appeals, and the indifference of South Africa, it was agreed by the Conference that the whole matter should stand over for the submission of an agreeable resolution after discussion had taken place.

At another meeting of the War Conference representatives, a draft resolution was put forth by Canada for the establishment of one Imperial Court of Appeal, the

---

13. Cd. 9177, 1918, pages 203 and 204. Mr. Hughes cited instances of unsatisfactory conditions in Australia; Colonial Sugar Refining Co. v. Brown.



memorandum for which court and the Dominion views to be expressed at the next Imperial Conference. General dissension was expressed as the impracticability of such a scheme and, consequently, a resolution, which was proposed by the Chancellor and proved acceptable to Mr. Hughes and Mr. Borden, was carried unanimously by the Conference postponing any further discussion on this matter until the next Conference after proposals and views had been, in the meantime, secured from the several Dominion Governments.

It was further pointed out, in regard to the matter of appeals to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, that the conditions of appeals to the Privy Council are the affairs of the particular Dominion concerned and that the existence of appeals to this Committee does not affect in any way the independent status of the Dominions any more than does the existence of the Permanent Court of International Justice at the Hague affect the status of any International State. The report stated that final appeal to the Judicial Committee is a matter of convenience as a last resort for members of the British Commonwealth. Such appeals are left to each part of the Empire primarily affected, with the proviso that, where issues are raised in which other parts are also concerned, changes in the present system should be carried out only after consultation and discussion.





Another constitutional matter called to the consideration of the Conference of 1918 was that of recognized channels of communication. Mr. Hughes regarded the old system of communication between the Dominion Prime Ministers and the British Government through the traditional channel of Governor-General, as His Majesty's agent in the Dominions, and the Colonial Office as obsolete because of recent developments in status, especially since the war. Because the Dominion Governments are now negotiating inter-governmentally on matters of major importance in foreign affairs the Conference stated that they should be able to confer directly with the head of the British Government.

This meant that the representative of the Crown in a Dominion should be advised wholly by that Dominion Cabinet and be in no way responsible to the British Cabinet. The Conference agreed to a resolution embodying direct consultation on matters of Cabinet importance through the medium of the Colonial Office, but if urgent, direct with the Prime Minister. The representatives of the British Government agreed to such a change but such necessary details were left over for future settlement. It was further agreed that, upon the absence of a Dominion Prime Minister, the Minister has the right to nominate a Cabinet Member to represent him at the meetings of the Cabinet held between the plenary sessions.<sup>14</sup>



1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and the role of the accounting department in ensuring the integrity of the financial statements. It also highlights the need for regular audits and the importance of transparency in financial reporting.

2. The second part of the document focuses on the internal controls and risk management framework. It describes the various controls in place to prevent fraud and errors, and the process for identifying and mitigating risks. It also discusses the role of the internal audit function in monitoring the effectiveness of these controls.

3. The third part of the document addresses the financial performance of the company over the past year. It provides a detailed analysis of the revenue, expenses, and profit, and compares these results to the budget and industry benchmarks. It also discusses the factors that have contributed to the company's success and the challenges it has faced.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the company's financial position and its ability to meet its obligations. It provides a detailed analysis of the company's assets, liabilities, and equity, and discusses the company's liquidity and solvency. It also discusses the company's capital structure and its plans for raising capital.

5. The fifth part of the document discusses the company's future prospects and its strategic goals. It provides a detailed analysis of the company's market position and its competitive advantages, and discusses the company's plans for growth and expansion. It also discusses the company's environmental, social, and governance (ESG) commitments and its plans for improving its ESG performance.

The Peace Conference offered the Dominion Prime Minister an excellent opportunity to incorporate the idea of Dominion autonomy into the British Imperial scheme of Government. Canada took the lead in asking for equal representation of the Dominions at the Peace Conference; the same was taken regarding equal membership in the League of Nations and in the Permanent Court. Mr. Borden also stated in definite terms the doctrine of the equality of the Dominions in relation to the Crown when he suggested that the Crown must act on the advice and responsibility of the Governments of the Dominions concerned in matters of appointment of Dominion Plenipotentiaries and in the ratification of treaties on behalf of the Dominions. The agreement of May, 1920 between Britain and Canada allowing her the right to appoint a minister at Washington is simply a further logical development of Canadian status under the Peace Treaty.

In spite of the fact that the Dominion representatives were invited to sign the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, there was nothing in the shape of a formal declaration which said they had assumed the position of independent international status. But after all, the fact remained that they had been permitted to sign the treaty.

Dr. A. B. Keith has written: "The Dominions thus emerged as possessed of a diplomatic status of a completely new kind, being autonomous members of an Empire."<sup>15</sup>

---

15. A. B. Keith, "Dominion Home Rule in Practice."



The first opportunity for examining the momentous development which had occurred since 1917 came with the meeting of the Imperial Conference in June, 1921. There were many unsettled problems concerning foreign policy, membership in the League, and Imperial relations inter se. This situation was summed up by the Prime Minister as follows:

"The British Dominions have now been accepted fully into the comity of nations by the whole world. \* \* \* They have achieved full national status, and now stand beside the United Kingdom as equal partners in the dignities and responsibilities of the British Commonwealth."<sup>16</sup>

After several plenary sessions and numerous meetings of the Prime Ministers devoted to the consideration of the proposed Conference on the constitutional relations of the component parts of the Empire, the Conference resolved that "no advantage is to be gained by holding a constitutional conference \* \* \* Continuous consultation \* \* \* can only be secured by a substantial improvement in communication between the component parts of the Empire."<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile, direct communication between the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the Dominion Prime Ministers established during the war was maintained, and

---

16. Cmd. 1474, 1923, page 14.

17. - - - - 9



the Dominions were kept in touch with all important developments.

The power given to Canada in 1920 to appoint a Minister at Washington was not exercised until November, 1926.. During this time the Irish Free State, as the result of correspondence between the British Ambassador and the Secretary of State, appointed her first<sup>18</sup> Minister in June, 1924, bearing a letter of Credence declaring him to be the ordinary channel of communication of the Irish Free State with the United States Government.<sup>19</sup> The same arrangement was established for Canada, and the United States made reciprocal appointments to Dublin and Ottawa.

The Imperial Conference of 1923 considered the subject of treaty-making rights. By a resolution the Conference declared it to be "the new and established practice" that on "any British Empire delegation for negotiation of international treaties, the Dominions and India be separately represented." By the same resolution each Dominion having "a full power" was to be accorded the right of concluding independent treaties on matters concerning itself only. With regard to defence, it was decided that thereon it was a matter for each of the several parts of the Empire to decide

---

18. Timothy Smiddy.

19. Irish States Treaty was passed by Da il Eireann Jan. 7, 1922. Irish Free State Act passed by the British Parliament in 1922.





as to the nature and extent to be taken.<sup>20</sup> From this reservation of "a full power" from the Imperial Government, no Dominion was absolutely unrestricted in concluding a foreign treaty.

A development of special interest, since the Imperial Conference of 1923, is the actual appointment of a Minister Plenipotentiary to represent the Irish Free State at Washington to be followed by the appointment of a Canadian diplomatic representative. However, in all cases other than where the Dominion directly accredits a diplomatic representative, communication will pass through the British Foreign Office.

To attain an independent status, a formal declaration was necessary together with working machinery which called for the alteration of any laws hindering the legislative activities of the Dominion. A Secretary for Dominion Affairs was created in June, 1925 in recognition of the structural change which the Empire had undergone.

The Conference of 1926 was felt to be an excellent opportunity for a full and extensive consideration of the position and the making of the necessary declarations of any future policy regarding "status." The Question of Dominion Status was referred to a Special Committee which issued a report on November<sup>21</sup> 20, 1926.

---

20, Annual Register, 1923, page 130.

21. Report on Inter-Imperial Relations, (The Balfour Report).



This Report was accepted and, as Manfred Nathan says, constitutes "the greatest landmark in the history of the subject"<sup>22</sup>

The Balfour Report contains a formal declaration of relations between the self-governing members of the Empire, and is conclusive. The matter of constitutional right was raised by Irish and South African politics. It was the desire of General Hertzog to secure "a constitutional declaration" from the Imperial Conference, expressing the willingness of South Africa to cooperate in the British Commonwealth provided that she might be made to feel implicit faith as to equal status. The Irish Free State was guarded in her expression. The essence of the constitutional declaration was voiced by the Balfour Report which defines the mutual relations of Great Britain and the Dominions as "autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any respect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations."<sup>23</sup>

The Committee also remarked that even though every Dominion must always remain the sole judge of the nature and extent of its cooperation, no disastrous effects will ever be apparent. This seems to be a declaration of cooperation as well

---

22. It is interesting to contrast the opinion of Dr. A. B. Keith in the "Outlook" for February 5, 1927, pages 144-145.  
23. Cmd. 2768, 1926, page 14.





as one of equality of status which covers the whole field of government. The effect of the Report<sup>24</sup> to establish certain constitutional conventions placing the Dominions on a basis of complete constitutional equality with Great Britain. Precisely in the field of foreign affairs there has grown up, in the last decade, a whole series of constitutional conventions which, without changing the law, have secured for the Dominions approximately the same powers in the conduct of foreign affairs as those possessed by Great Britain.

The Balfour Report further gave a declaration of relations between the self-governing members of the Empire, stating "that nothing would be gained by attempting to lay down a constitution for the British Empire, "which" bears no resemblance to any other organization which now or ever has existed." It defines the position and mutual relations of Great Britain as "autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any respect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations."<sup>24</sup>

The Committee further remarked that geographical and other conditions rendered federation impossible and regarded autonomy as the only alternative. It was advised that the Royal Title be changed to include the establishment of the

---

24. A.L. Lowell, "British Commonwealth of Nations," page 615.





Irish Free State as a Dominion, so as to read: "George Fifth, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, Ireland, and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor<sup>25</sup> of India,"

As the matter of the operation of Dominion legislation appeared for attention, the Report stated that clarification was necessary concerning such matters as Royal disallowance of Dominion Parliament Acts, reservation of Dominion legislation for Royal signature, extraterritorial rights, and consultation and agreement concerning legislation. However, because of the complexity of the problem, the Committee declared itself unready to render an immediate decision.<sup>26</sup> The recommendation was that these matters be referred to a Committee to be set up by Great Britain and the Dominions so that investigations and recommendations might be made. The purpose of such a Committee would be to establish, by legislation, machinery to effect "Dominion Status."

The Conference did assert definitely "the right of the Government of each Dominion to advise the Crown in all matters relating to its own affairs and the constitutional practice is that legislation by the Parliament at Westminster applying to a Dominion would only be passed with the consent of the Dominion concerned."

---

25. The Royal Title had twice, previously, been altered. Jan. 1, 1877, (to include India) and in 1901 under the Royal Title Act.

26. Cmd. 2768, 1926, Page 17. The Committee reported at the Imperial Conference of 1930 but no definite decision was reached. The matter was discussed with reference to India.



## B. Imperial Communications

The British Empire, without doubt, is the largest and most varied in the history of the world. It comprises vast areas in practically all parts of the globe, harboring civilizations, races, and governments which differ widely both in nature and in form. The Empire includes crown colonies, semi-self-governing areas, and self-governing dominions which must be kept in close communication both with the British Government and inter se. And because of the vastness of the Empire the problem of improved communication is a vital concern which requires continually serious study, so that the bond of the Empire may be strengthened. Although much in the way of improved communication by way of land and sea has already taken place much more remains to be done.

England has developed water routes around Africa to India, through the Suez Canal, and from England to Canada. Aeroplane lines from Cairo to Bombay, Cairo to Cape Town, and Cape Town to Lagos help to unite the Empire. A chain of high-power wireless stations connects every point with Rugby, England by the "beam" system. Reduced cable rates invite an exchange of news, and English money is invested in the Empire at a low rate of interest. And despite all these projects, British statesmen today feel that greater improvement along these lines



must be realized if the Empire is to remain united.

1. Air, Telephony, Telegraph, and Shipping:

Owing to the burdens and anxieties of war conditions, no extensive discussion as to matters of communication took place at the Imperial War Conference of 1917; but Sir Joseph Ward did obtain permission from the Chairman to place on file notices of motion regarding steamship, cable, and wireless communication that they may be included in the records of this Conference.

One of the notices reaffirmed the Resolutions of 1907 and 1911 that a fast mail service seemed desirable between Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, and that such a mail route should be established; that the necessary facilities be provided on the route chosen and that financial support be given by the countries agreeing to the establishment of such a service. The other notice, dealing with cable and wireless communications, advocated the reduction of telegraph rates inter se by means of state-owned cables across the Atlantic, and the establishment of a chain of high-power British owned wireless stations within the Empire.

Again, in 1918, the policy of state-Ownership of cable lines across the Atlantic as a means of strengthening Imperial relations was advanced by Mr. Ward.





He advocated state-ownership for lower cost and efficiency, and a resolution reaffirming this principle, as suggested in 1917, was agreed upon.<sup>27</sup> But, little if anything could be done at this critical time because of post-war problems. It was further pointed out that it was very desirable that an Imperial Investigation Board be established in an endeavour to encourage commercial and industrial relations of the Empire inter se, and that the matter be referred to a sub-committee which was to report at the next Conference.

The matter of improved communication including air, telephony, telegraph, and shipping was referred to a special committee which submitted a report in 1921. The Conference suggested that the report be submitted for consideration to the Governments and Parliaments of the various parts of the Empire as the Dominion representatives were unwilling to pledge financial support at the time. The British Government, however, was instructed to take steps for the erection of the remaining wireless stations for which they were responsible and cooperation was urged among the Dominions. The Conference further approved the recommendations of the sub-committee concerning the limitation of ship-owner's liability by definite clause to be contained in Bills of Lading and urged uniform legislation on the matter. The Conference agreed that the Committee of Shipping be made a permanent body

---

27. Cd.9177, 1918, page 128.



to be known as the Imperial Shipping Committee and should continue its inquiries

The Imperial Conference of 1926 praised highly the work of the Imperial Shipping Committee and the Imperial Economic Conference and recommended, by Resolution, that the Committee continue on its present basis. The recommendation was also made that, as a part of its work, the Committee should make special investigations as to Empire marketing and foodstuffs, raw materials for possible further marketing enquiries, suggestions for preference, and preliminary surveys concerning Empire trade and marketing.<sup>28</sup>

Matters were discussed regarding the management of the Pacific Cable understanding between the Governments interested.<sup>29</sup> It was generally agreed to provide, as soon as possible, for a Pacific Cable Board, for an amount of annual reserve, and for the disposal of an annual surplus. The Conference was duly impressed with the necessity of improving the speed of ocean communication, especially with the more distant parts, but was unwilling at the time to make any recommendation for a specific proposal.

While uniformity of legislation was very desirable, it proved difficult to reconcile the application of certain provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894

---

28. Cmd. 2768, 1926. Page 55.

29. Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.



with the constitutional status of several members of the Commonwealth. It was concluded, after due consideration, that such matters be referred to a sub-committee which should advise as to such principles as should apply to merchant shipping legislation within the Empire in view of recent constitutional developments. India was to be represented on this Committee because of her vast economic and commercial interests.

The Conference noted that effect had been given to the Bills of Lading Convention Act of 1923 in many parts of the Empire and that certain necessary legislation was under consideration in most parts of the Empire. It was agreed that international uniformity would greatly facilitate overseas trade by removing doubt from the minds of shipowners and shippers concerning their liability under a contract of carriage. The matter of uniformity of limitation of shipowner's liability to maritime mortgages and liens was approved as suggested by the Brussels Convention of 1922 and 1923 to secure international understanding and cooperation. By Resolution these Conventions were commended to the consideration of the Empire Governments. The Imperial Economic Conference of 1923 also approved the policy of immunity for state-owned ships, and this policy was outlined rather definitely in the International Convention at Brussels in 1926. This Convention was recommended by resolution to the consideration of Dominion Governments.





The International Conference at Washington in June, 1926 centered its attention on the inconvenience and loss caused by the pollution of coastal waters and fishing grounds by the discharge of oil. The Conference recommended that certain areas be prescribed on the coasts of maritime countries and recognized fishing grounds within which oil should not be discharged, and that each Government require vessels flying its flag to respect all such areas.<sup>30</sup>

Interesting discussions took place regarding the progress of civil aviation in the various parts of the Empire. The British Government, in an effort to bring the more distant parts nearer to London, suggested concentration on two main routes: England to Australia, thence to South Africa, and the first links in these routes were forged in services established in 1927.<sup>31</sup> It was realized that the best prospect for progress was for each of the Dominions of the Empire to undertake the responsibility for developing her own local sections and so gradually to build a complete system of Imperial air routes.

A readiness was expressed on the part of the Dominions to give consideration to the matter, and the sub-committee reported that continuous attention and cooperation should be given to the matter by the Governments as to the construction of aerodromes and moorings. The Conference expressed satisfaction at the decisions of the Imperial Government to carry out



a series of experimental demonstrations of flights in South Africa and in the region of Singapore in 1928 and 1929. The Dominions were urged to preface for these flights in whatever constructive ways they could. The suggestion was also offered for the meeting of an Imperial Air Conference in 1928 and 1929.

## 2. Imperial Statistics:

In 1917 Mr. Smith, Secretary of the Board of Trade, suggested that, inasmuch as in some parts of the Empire all Dominions were not represented, trade commissioners should be at the disposal of the Dominions, if such were the case. This idea was carried further when other representatives pointed out that if, after the war, changed conditions were to be met, wider facilities must be provided to merchants and producers in order that Empire trade interests might be protected. Not only would such commissioners be of service to each individual Dominion, but also to the entire Empire in its competitive search for extended markets after the war. India especially, was favorable in the light of her vast economic interests and pledged her cooperation. Canada expressed her approval provided that such an office would not be an infringement upon her already existing trade representative. The agreement of the Conference was accorded by a resolution favoring the establishment of a Trade Commissioners Service to extend throughout the





Empire and urged inter-Imperial cooperation.<sup>32</sup> The duties of such a Commission were vaguely outlined to include investigation into trade conditions inter se and compilation of these survey trade statistics that they might be available to the Dominions to make whatever use of them the various Governments might choose in order to encourage Imperial trade.

This matter was again mentioned by the Canadian representative as simply an extension to the Imperial Sphere of a principle which had already been adopted in Canada. He suggested that an Imperial Statistical Bureau be formed to compile Empire statistics so that such figures, estimates, and expenditures might be available to the Empire as a whole. It was suggested that such material would necessarily be of value to tradesmen and producers in ascertaining Empire requirements. The members were in favor of the project, especially India, and a resolution was passed to this effect. At this time two special resolutions were passed concerning wool and foodstuff statistics.<sup>33</sup>

The problem of Imperial Statistics received no attention at the Conference of 1921 primarily because the Dominion Representatives devoted their entire time to post-war problems, foreign policy, and defence. In 1923 the situation as expressed in 1917 and 1918 was reaffirmed and the matter was placed under the consideration of the Imperial Economic Conference which met in 1923.

---

32. Cd, 8566, 1917. Page 20.

33. - 9177, 1918. -- 87





In 1926 a discussion took place concerning the advantages which might accrue to Empire trade from an extension regarding the standardization of industrial products. It appeared that considerable savings to manufacturers and consumers had already been effected in various parts of the Empire where standardized products had been sold, and using this saving as a basis, greater benefits would be possible were the system to be established throughout the Empire with the cooperation and encouragement of the Governments. This feeling was expressed by the Conference<sup>34</sup> by means of a resolution.

### 3. Imperial News Service

The Canadian Representative placed the idea of an Imperial News Service before the Imperial War Conference of 1918. Sir Robert Borden pointed out that, in view of war experiences, it was vital that the various parts of the Empire be informed as to what was going on in the various Commonwealths, thereby tending to lessen misunderstandings which are likely to arise when such news is not available. The proposal was that Empire news be gathered in London and made available for the presses of the other portions of the Empire through the medium of the Ministry of Information and the British Press; then to be distributed to the various Governments.

The Conference agreed to a resolution stating its approval that such a service<sup>be</sup> made available, the news to be supplied



through British sources, and a definite scheme to be worked out by the Imperial Government and submitted to the Governments for approval.<sup>35</sup>

The Imperial Conference of 1921 favored a reaffirmation of the discussion of an Imperial News Service in 1918 and further suggested the reduction of news rates for Empire news by means of government subsidy. The same attitude was apparent toward the exchange of Empire news in 1923, and provision was made for a weekly summary of Imperial and world affairs to be sent to the Prime Ministers of all the Dominions direct from the English Foreign Office. It was also suggested by Canada that hereafter the practice be adopted for the Dominion delegates to the League of Nations Assembly to stop for an indefinite period of time in London to catch up on news before proceeding to the League meeting. In this way it was thought that Empire unity might be strengthened and a better understanding inculcated in the minds of the Empire representatives.

In 1926 attention was called by Sir Roderick Jones,<sup>36</sup> to the fact that the greater part of world news published in Canada was obtained through America rather than through British channels, the reason being that it is cheaper to carry news of all kinds from New York to Canada and distribute it among Canadian papers than it is to get the same news direct from London.

---

<sup>35</sup>. Cd.9177, 1918. Pages 92--94.

<sup>36</sup>. Sir Roderick Jones, K.B.E. (Reuters, Limited)





While Canada would prefer to get her news through English sources, she is forced to obtain it through New York owing to the lessened cost. Therefore it was advocated that a reduction be made in the press rate between England and Canada. Reduction in cable rates was especially urged between England and India. Postal rates were also discussed and a recommendation for lower rates and for a more efficient service was made.

#### 4. Imperial Parcels Delivery:

The plan for an inter-Imperial Parcels Delivery was introduced before the Conference of 1918 by the President of the Board of Trade. He contended that better facilities in this matter would tend to encourage Imperial trade, and urged that the Governments prepare a detailed scheme to promote this object. The Post-master general suggested simplification as to rates and procedure in the realm for the mailing of letters as well as packages. The Conference agreed to the value of such reform, and placed its views on record.<sup>37</sup>

In 1923 all such matters were referred to an Economic Conference which reported favorably at the Conference of 1926 reaffirming all previous suggested action on the matter of methods for improved communication.

The remedy suggested is merely a uniform scheme at a flat rate for all Imperial parcels. The resolution in itself is not binding, yet it tends to urge uniformity and





cooperative effort among the various Governments to make possible an effective parcels system whereby Imperial interests will obviously gain certain advantages.

5. Empire Patent:

In 1918 the Representatives demanded an Empire Patent and this demand was considered by a special Committee, Memoranda were distributed to the various Governments in 1919 and 1920 with favorable replies from Canada, India, and Newfoundland as to the assembling of a conference for the consideration of such a matter. It was felt that an Empire patent, one valid throughout the Empire, would render unnecessary the making of separate applications for such in the United Kingdom and each Dominion, thereby lessening inconvenience and delay in its grant. However, it was agreed that a Conference be held in London for the consideration of this matter.

6. National War Museum:

At the Imperial Conference of 1917 the Chairman called to the attention of the Representatives a proposal by the Imperial Government for the establishment of a National War Museum representative of Imperial and Dominion rôles during the war. No action was taken, although the idea was given some favorable reception, because several of the Dominions had already established such Museums, especially New Zealand



### 7. Dominion House:

At the request of Earl Grey, a scheme was introduced before the Conference of 1917 to use the Aldwych site in the heart of London for a Dominion House to harbor offices of all the Dominions. The Conference expressed its appreciation and thanks to Earl Grey for his interest but, "felt it not to be practical to proceed with the proposal either under existing conditions, or in the immediate future<sup>38</sup> \* \* \* because the proposition was too vast, because Australia had already erected very elaborate buildings, and because war conditions, then existing, did not warrant any such expenditure.

### 8. Imperial Defence:

For a period of years prior to the outbreak of the war in 1914 the matter of Imperial Defence had been paramount in the minds of English statesmen. Britain was much concerned with the German naval program in 1908 and 1909, and therefore suggested a Naval Conference in 1909 for the purpose of formulating some Empire Naval Policy; but the proposal met with little favor among the larger Dominions, Canada, for example, expressed the desire of establishing a small navy of her own. South Africa was willing to contribute to the British Admiralty only a very modest sum. Australia and New Zealand were very much in favor of British protection owing to their geographical location as two of the more remote sections of the Empire. India, too, realized her economic dependence upon British protection.



With the advent of the war came somewhat altered conditions within the British Empire. The disaster of 1914 gave added impulse to Imperial unity, and, at the same time, augmented the semi-dormant forces of Dominion nationalism. Consequently, the close of the war witnessed the emergence of a number of complete nations, self-governing Dominions within a British Commonwealth, necessitating an understanding as to their individual status as members of the great organization. And the post-war period was deeply engrossed in the settlement of war problems and in the establishment of governmental machinery to take care of the changed relationships determined by the war.

It was the absolute determination of the Dominions at the Conference of 1921 to do nothing excessive in cost in the matter of Imperial Defence. A resolution was passed on Naval Defence to the effect that, while the necessity of cooperation was recognized, the Conference was of the opinion that nothing should be done until after the coming Disarmament Conference at Washington.<sup>39</sup> Discussions took place concerning such principle as would ensure cooperation in military and air matters, but nothing was agreed upon that was productive.

The matter of Imperial Defence was minutely surveyed at the Imperial Conference of 1923 in regard to the necessity of cooperation and mutual assistance considering the





political and geographical locations of the various parts of the Empire, Naval, military, and air matters were fully discussed and it was agreed that it was necessary to provide for the defence of Empire trade. The matter was left for the Parliaments of the several parts of the Empire to decide as to the nature and extent of any action to be taken by the several Dominions. A resolution was passed which placed on record the view that each represented portion of the Empire had the primary responsibility for local defence, that adequate protection was necessary for maritime routes of communication; that mobility of fleets be assured through naval bases; that there should exist an equality of naval strength with that of the greatest foreign power; and that cooperation was necessary in the matter of air-craft.

Deep interest was voiced by Australia, New Zealand and India in the naval base at Singapore as a means of securing the necessary mobility to provide for the security of trade and territory in eastern waters. The representatives expressed their realization that it was necessary for Great Britain to maintain a Home Air Force of sufficient strength to give adequate protection against air attack. The Conference also expressed its interest in a limitation of armaments.<sup>40</sup>

The Conference accomplished nothing to lighten the burden of Imperial responsibility or to help keep open the sea routes. The Imperial Government was left in both cases



to keep pace with the rapid strides of the United States. However, a little shame on the part of the Dominions for so burdening the Westminster Government was felt by New Zealand where the government was anxious to consider a yearly contribution of 100,000 pounds to help maintain the base at Singapore.<sup>41</sup>

In 1926 special consideration was given to the matter of Imperial Defence regarding arrangements for the coordination of Defence questions inter se. The British Prime Minister reviewed the work and organization of the Committee on Imperial Defence. He outlined the chief development since the last Conference, and the Resolution of 1923 was reaffirmed. The Conference everred its sympathy in regard to the reduction and limitation of armaments, and added the vital qualification that any action taken must be compatible with the integrity and security of all parts of the Empire.

The Dominions were not disposed to contribute toward the cost of maintenance, Australia and New Zealand expressed themselves in favor of the steps taken by the British Government to develop a naval base at Singapore in view of its vital importance in ensuring the safety of world-wide trade routes. Progress in matters of air forces was noted and the Dominions acknowledged the value of the Imperial Defence College in London

---

41. The base at Singapore was abandoned in 1924 owing to the apparent indifference of many of the Dominions. It was later resumed under Sir Stanley Baldwin.





to train officers. But the Dominions were unwilling to commit themselves in Defence matters and reserved the right for consideration of issues. Thus the net progress in Defence matters<sup>42</sup> can be treated as nil.

### C. Treaties and Foreign Policy:

During the period from 1839 to 1914 the British Empire had developed into a group of autonomous nations without weakening the spirit of cooperation or destroying the basic institutions of Crown and citizenship. Common concerns were conducted by means of Imperial Conferences from 1907; the Dominions met with Great Britain on equal terms. The powers of the Dominions covered domestic matters, defence, tariff and immigration policies. No British commercial treaty bound the Dominions "except by the expressed consent of their government," and Canada, the senior Dominion, freely negotiated her own commercial treaties without control or interference except of a formal character. But as regards foreign policy the Dominions, up to 1914, were still dependent upon Great Britain.

Of course, nothing was attempted in regard to this matter during the War. Britain and the Dominions were too deeply entangled in military and post-war problems to think of bringing the question of a change in foreign policy before the Conferences of 1917 and 1918, but the matter was discussed rather fully in 1921 with a view to the American suggestion for





a Washington Conference for the Limitation of Armaments.

At the Conference of 1921 the conception presented was that of a unitary foreign policy of the British Empire in which the Dominions were to have a voice, but which was to be declared to the world through the British Foreign Office. The discussion<sup>43</sup> revealed a unanimous opinion as to the main lines to be followed by the British policy and deep conviction that the whole weight of the Empire should be concentrated behind a united understanding and common action in foreign affairs." One question upon which unanimity seemed impossible was the problem of the future of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance which was due to expire in 1921. The Foreign Office and the Prime Ministers of Australia and New Zealand favored renewal, but Canada was opposed because of its effect upon the United States. This difficulty was resolved by the summoning of the Washington Conference and merging the Alliance into a treaty between the United States, the British Empire, France and Japan regarding insular possessions and Dominions in the Pacific.

The invitation of the United States to the Washington Conference was accepted by the British Government as such without reference to the Dominions as it was arranged at a recent conference that His Majesty's Government should represent the whole Empire at Washington, but the Dominions stated that they



would prefer that the delegation include men of experience in Dominion and Indian matters. General Smuts insisted that the same procedure be used as in the Paris Conference and this was agreed to by Lloyd George. Where voting was necessary, the assent of the Empire was indicated by the leader of the British representatives acting on the behalf of his Dominion colleagues. Also the combined forces of Great Britain and the Dominions acted as a unit for the purpose of determining the 5-5-3 ratio, and in respect of all other limitations imposed by the Conference. The outcome was "to reconcile the principle of diplomatic unity in the Empire's international relations with the principle of coordinate autonomy for each self-governing nation which remained without serious challenge until 1922<sup>44</sup>."

Since the Dominions were to help to determine Empire foreign policy and were to share in its responsibility, the problem of machinery to secure these principles had to be faced. In the past the Dominions had opposed any tendency toward an Imperial Council or Cabinet with the power to contract binding decisions. The term "Conference" had been adopted in the official report. But as Lloyd George pointed out, "joint control means joint responsibility<sup>45</sup>." The Conference agreed upon an apportionment of reparation receipts under the Treaty of Versailles<sup>46</sup>.

---

44. Chanak Incident, September, 1922. 45. Irish Settlement Speech, December, 1921. 46. United Kingdom 86.85; Minor Colonies .80; Canada 4.35; Australia 4.35; New Zealand 1.75; South Africa .60; Newfoundland .10; India 1.20.





The work of the League of Nations was outlined by Mr. Balfour and certain special difficulties were noted. General appreciation of the work of the League was voiced and general support was urged in behalf of the League as a valuable instrument of international peace. The matter of Condominium in the New Hebrides was referred to a Special Committee.

For the Dominions, Resolution 9 of the Imperial War Conference of 1917<sup>47</sup> meant an equal voice in foreign affairs for in March, 1919, at the time of the discussion of the Peace Treaty, they claimed the right to become parties thereunto, declaring that:

"The Crown is the supreme executive in the United Kingdom<sup>and</sup> in all the Dominions, but it acts on the advice of the different ministers within the different constitutional units; and under Resolution 9, 1917, the organization of the Empire is to be based upon equality of nationhood."<sup>48</sup> Thus the Dominions signed the Peace Treaties and became members of the League as distinct and separate states.

Canada asked and obtained the right to send a minister to Washington; the Irish Free State was allowed the same position as Canada and sent one immediately.

The Canadian Premier said that her Parliament must determine whether the country should participate in a war in which other parts of the British Empire should be involved - - - - -

---

47. Cd. 8566, 1917. Page 60.

48. A/L. Lowell, H.D. Hall; British Commonwealth of Nations. p. 624, quoting--Canadian Parliament Paper Sessional 41j, A. 1919, P. 6-7.





at the time of the question of preventing the Turks by force from crossing into Europe. When the treaty was made with Turkey at Lausanne,<sup>49</sup> Canada said she assumed no responsibility for treaties which she did not help to negotiate and refused ratification.<sup>50</sup> No doubt a lack of interest accounts for the failure of the Dominions to insist upon representation in the Lausanne Conference and of the failure of the British Government to secure it for them. However, ratification was finally accomplished with the concurrence of all Empire Governments.

The Protocol<sup>51</sup> for Specific Settlement of International Disputes failed owing to the refusal of the Dominions to accept it.

The Dominions not only refused to be bound by treaties made by the Mother Country, but Canada ventured a step further, insisting upon the right to make treaties without any interference from Great Britain. The most outstanding fact as proof of this demand is the Halibut Treaty of 1923 which was concluded between United States and Canada to regulate halibut fisheries on the Pacific Coast. Canada demanded it should be signed by her representative alone; and this privilege was finally yielded by the Foreign Office.<sup>52</sup> In consequence of this step a resolution was passed by the Conference of 1923 assuming the right of each dominion to make its own treaties, and provided for forms

---

49. July 4, 1923---replaced the treaty of Sevres.

50. March, 1924.

51. Geneva Protocol, 1924.



Of signature and ratification where the treaty affects only one part of the Empire.<sup>53</sup>

All matters agreed to in regard to foreign policy at the Conference were to be submitted to the Governments and Parliaments of the various portions of the Empire, and the resolution to this effect expressed the hope that the deliberations of the Conference would meet with such approval. Only once is there any record that the Conference "arrived at a conclusion" on foreign policy and that was with regard to America's request in connection with the control of the liquor traffic for an extension of the three mile limit. However, the Conference showed a willingness to agree on general principles of policy including a hearty support of the League of Nations

As to the matter of the Locarno Treaties the "security pact" between Great Britain, Belgium, France, Germany, and Italy<sup>54</sup> is the culmination of the tendency toward the breakup of the original conception of an indivisible British Empire foreign policy because the treaty was negotiated and signed by Great Britain alone. Article 9 of the treaty excludes the Dominions from its obligations:

"The present treaty shall impose no obligation on any of the British Dominions or India unless the Government of each Dominion or of India signifies its acceptance thereof."<sup>55</sup>

\*\*\*\*\*

52. Other instances: Smuggling, June 6, 1924; Narcotic Laws, Jan. 8, 1925; Boundaries, Feb. 24, 1925.

53. Cmd. 1987, 1923, p. 13-17. 54. Only one of the Locarno Treaties was signed by Great Britain.

55. None have accepted it.





The reason for this situation is obvious. The failure of the Geneva Protocol of 1924 lead to the negotiation of the Locarno Treaties. The British Empire desired that "the Empire should have a single policy" in respect of the Protocol or of any scheme substituted for it and an attempt was made to secure a special Imperial Conference for the adoption of such a policy. The Dominions replied that, while in agreement with Great Britain as to the desirability of rejecting the Protocol, a Special Conference was impracticable. A substitute for the Protocol was felt urgent so Sir Austen Chamberlain went ahead without attempting a Conference as he was forced to meet a perilous situation by taking action which the situation demanded of Great Britain. Even though Great Britain pledges to go to war if necessary, while the Dominions are expressly exempt from obligations, the possibility of Locarno having an effect on the break up of the Empire is remote for both the Dominion obligations, as members of the British Commonwealth, and their obligations as members of the League of Nations would surely involve the Dominions in at least technical belligerency in any event of such a war arising. Thus the Locarno Treaty marks the recognition of the fact that, in certain respects, Great Britain must conduct her own foreign policy in relation to European matters as Canada is conducting her relations with the United States. However, such wide interests as peace and defence still tend to unite members of the Commonwealth in common policies.





Developments in the New Hebrides were examined and possibilities of future action discussed by representatives of Great Britain in consultation with the Prime Ministers of Australia and New Zealand.

A comprehensive review of protectorates and mandated areas was given by the Secretary of State. Stress was laid by Colonial representatives upon the economic importance of such areas within the Empire. Special reference was centered upon the matter of Ruanda boundary<sup>56</sup> leaving available a strip of the British mandated territory of Tanganyika for construction purposes. New Zealand expressed her interest in researches to be undertaken in the Antarctic. Developments in the East and in Palestine were noted, but no action was taken.

At the Imperial Conference of 1926 the usual appreciation of British Foreign Policy by Dominion representatives was offered, but no serious progress toward the settlement of the fundamental problem of improving the means of co-operation on vital issues was realized.

The Conference of 1926 assumed the right of separate negotiations of all kinds with recommendations that notice be given to other parts of the Empire affected. In regard general conduct it "was frankly recognized that in this sphere, as in the sphere of defence, the major share of responsibility rests with His Majesty's Government in Great Britain \* \* \* \* \*

\*\*\*

---

56. Reference is to the negotiations with Belgium Government.



We felt that the governing consideration must be that neither Great Britain nor the Dominions could be committed to the acceptance of active obligations except with the definite assent of their own Government. In cases other than those where Dominion Ministers were accredited to the heads of Foreign States, it was agreed to be very desirable that existing diplomatic channels should continue to be used as between the Dominion Governments and Foreign Governments, in matters of general political concern<sup>57</sup>," Thus the Dominions can if they choose send their own ministers to foreign countries; but until this is necessary they are advised to use the diplomats of Great Britain. Although the Crown becomes the instrument of foreign policy, yet the right of the Dominion Governments to advise the King in such matters was conceded, with the advice that such communication reach the Crown by means of the channel of the British Ministry.

The legal position that, when the King declares war, all his subjects are at war, was fully accepted in the discussion on the Lausanne and Locarno Treaties but not yet altered by the Balfour Report. By virtue of both the Balfour Report and the treaty resolution of 1923 "the initiative leading to war is intrusted to each and every self-governing partner of the Commonwealth as an essential function of equality of status in domestic and external affairs"<sup>58</sup>.

\*\*

57. A. L. Lowell, and H. D. Hall, The British Commonwealth of Nations, page 615.

58. - - - - - as above page 616.





The exercise of this initiative, however, is subject to the conduct of foreign affairs generally--i.e. that the Dominions generally have been consulted and that the policy in question does not conflict with that of His Majesty's Government. The Dominions and Great Britain are all loyal members of the League of Nations and their relationships to the League and its obligations form one of the few major principles in which they are committed to common action in world affairs. Membership in the League gives a basis for common policy where war and peace are involved, and has enabled the members of the British Commonwealth to realize the value of group life.

It was definitely agreed in 1926 in regard to the procedure relating to treaties that negotiation should take place only after due consideration of its affect on other parts of the Empire had been given, and assent had been offered. The form of the treaty was determined to be in the name of the King as a symbol of the special relationships between different parts of the Empire. Plenipotentiary powers were to be issued by the King and signature was understood to include mandated areas of the part of the Empire unless otherwise stated. Thus the governing consideration must be that neither Great Britain nor the Dominions can be committed to the acceptance of active obligations unless with the definite assent of their own government.

Other minor matters of policy were reviewed concerning the economic importance of the parts of the Empire inter se the need for development of valuable areas, Canadian shipping



1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that this is essential for ensuring transparency and accountability in the organization's operations.

2. The second part outlines the various methods and tools used to collect and analyze data. It mentions the use of surveys, interviews, and focus groups to gather information from stakeholders. Additionally, it discusses the application of statistical analysis to interpret the collected data.

3. The third part describes the process of identifying and addressing the needs and concerns of the community. It highlights the importance of active listening and communication with the community members to understand their perspectives and requirements.

4. The fourth part details the implementation of the project and the monitoring of its progress. It notes that regular reporting and evaluation are necessary to ensure that the project remains on track and achieves its intended goals.

5. The fifth part discusses the challenges encountered during the project and the strategies used to overcome them. It mentions the importance of flexibility and adaptability in the face of unexpected obstacles.

6. The sixth part provides a summary of the findings and conclusions of the study. It states that the project has successfully identified the key issues and implemented effective solutions to address them.

7. The seventh part offers recommendations for future research and actions. It suggests that further studies should be conducted to explore the long-term impact of the project and to identify new areas for improvement.

8. The eighth part concludes the document by expressing gratitude to the individuals and organizations that supported the project throughout its duration.

Conference on trade conditions, research in the whaling industry by the R.R.S. "Discovery" in the Antarctic, the successful tour of Africa by the Prince of Wales in 1925, expansion of trade, etc. The work of the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League was approved by the Conference and Dominion representatives were asked for suggestions. A discussion of British policy in the Antarctic took place, and the Egyptian situation received very close and careful consideration, particularly in regard to British policy there and the matter of the future status of that country. However, such information is not available.

#### D. Irish Free State:

The outbreak of the war in 1914 found the status of Ireland still undetermined, and it was fated to remain so for some years to come. The result was a steady increase in acts of violence which culminated in the outbreak of crime and civil war between 1919 and 1921. Just to what extent the attitude of either England or Ireland was responsible for the condition of affairs is difficult to estimate; but one may safely say that scarcely any period in Irish history can surpass this for bitterness of feeling and acts of violence,

A Home Rule Bill was passed in 1920 providing for two Irelands---- Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland---- with the provision that if Southern Ireland saw fit, she might



withdraw from the agreement as a part of the Empire under British rule. Inasmuch as this served only as a provisional government Britain felt it to be the better part of wisdom to seek some actual understanding with the Irish in view of the approaching Washington Conference and uncertain conditions in Egypt and India.

Britain published her terms, offering Ireland Dominion Status with an entire control of finances, taxation, police, and law courts. In return she asked the right to control the waters about Ireland; to recruit soldiers in Ireland; to establish air bases; to enjoy free trade within the United Kingdom, and Ireland's assumption of a portion of the national debt.<sup>61</sup>

De Valera and Sinn Fein refused to enter any such negotiations stressing complete independence. The British again endeavored for the conclusion of an understanding and agreed to recognize the existence of an Irish Free State with constitutional status similar to that of Canada. A treaty was also proposed wherein the Irish would swear allegiance to the Free State and "to be faithful to the King by virtue of their common citizenship in the British Commonwealth."<sup>62</sup> A number of guarantees hitherto demanded by the British were adhered to, and others quietly omitted; the Irish agreed to limit their army to the defence of Ireland by the Imperial navy, and to

---

61. W.P.Hall, Empire to Commonwealth, page 285.

62. This is known as the Fourth Home Rule Bill.





share in the national debt.

The treaty met with opposition in both England and Ireland. But the underlying explanation is to be accounted for by the fact that the British public was weary of the Irish question, so opposition to the matter found little support in England. De Valera urged that the treaty be rejected, but in spite of his opposition the treaty won in Dail by a few votes.<sup>63</sup> De Valera resigned, riots broke out, and rebel fighting ensued

Though the Free State was victorious by 1924, it was on the verge of economic and social ruin. Finance was in a critical condition. Expenditures were cut; a complete reorganization of Irish agriculture was effected; a program of national economy was put into operation with the consequent result that under President Cosgrave Irish credit rose steadily. Ulster remained independent of the Free State. Thus, for the present, compromise won as a practical solution for an age-long source of friction.

The Irish Free State was extended the privilege of attending her first Imperial Conference in 1923. Her delegates were Mr. Cosgrave, President of the Executive Council, General Mac Mahon, Chief of Staff, Major-General O'Connell. Assistant Chief of Staff, and Esmonde acting for Mr. Mc Gilligan, Minister for Industry and Commerce.

---

63. The Irish Treaty was signed December 6, 1921; Ireland was admitted to the League of Nations September, 1923.





The representatives of the Free State expressed their gratitude to the conference for the welcome extended to them as junior members, and voiced their willingness to accept their share of the common burdens and responsibilities.

The delegates of the Irish Free State were somewhat handicapped when it came to the discussion of problems at the conference because such matters were new to them. Professor John Mac Neill, Minister of Education of the Irish Free State, expressed his desire that the conference exert an especial effort to make effective the objects of the League of Nations as one means toward the establishment of a common course in foreign policy for the nations comprising the British Commonwealth.

The Irish Free State was represented by a large delegation at the Imperial Conference of 1926 and occupied a prominent position in the discussion of Empire affairs. Irish progress in agricultural development was surveyed and Irish delegates pointed out that from the interdependence of Great Britain and the Free State it would follow that whatever might make for the economic betterment of the one would have a like consequence for the other. The Secretary of State for Air placed emphasis upon the fact that with a comparatively short service the Irish Free State could link Ireland with the great air routes of the Empire and the world. A suggestion was also made with regard to the plausibility of an "all red" route from Canada to the western coast of Ireland. The Free State offered her cooperation in this respect.



These examples, along with many others serve to show the enthusiasm and good faith with which the Irish Free State entered the British circle.

Even though peace has once more been restored in Ireland, many problems still remain -- especially that of the status of the Free Irish State within the Empire. What the future holds for the Irish situation it is impossible to predict, but the fact is obvious that the Irish Independents form a strong combination in the Free State Government, an element which cannot be disregarded by the government in power. The Cosgrave government is not an entirely satisfactory one, and under it the administration of Ireland cannot progress very rapidly unless the Revolutionary element is to be weakened by compromise. Ireland is not solid, and the radical De Valera faction is dangerous because of its vigorous anti-constitutional attitude.

#### E. British Policy in India:

In view of the fact that India rendered valuable service to the Empire during the Great War, it was felt that, even though not yet a self-governing Dominion, she was entitled to a voice in Empire policy. On this subject a pronouncement was made by Edwin Montagu as Secretary of State for India;

"The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India is in complete accord, is that of the





increasing of the Association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and of the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire.<sup>65</sup>""

According to Professor Zimmern this pronouncement is "a landmark in British Imperial history" as it marks the definite repudiation of the idea that there can be, under the British flag one form of constitutional evolution for West and another for East. Even though India is not yet self-governing and we do not know when she will be consummate in that sense, this idea does represent an active policy, and its importance is to be found in the fact that India has been accorded the recognition of Dominion status though she does not enjoy responsible government.

At the Imperial War Conference of 1917 the matter of the representation of India at future Imperial Conferences was placed before the Conference, and discussion took place relative to indicating to India that she might expect to be summoned to later Conferences. A resolution was introduced by the Chairman, moved by Sir Robert Borden, seconded by Mr. Massey, and adopted by the Conference in the following terms:

"That the Imperial War Conference desires to place on record its view that the Resolution of the Imperial Conference

---





Of 1907 should be modified to permit India being fully represented at all future Imperial Conferences, and that the necessary steps should be taken to secure the assent of the various Governments in order that the next Imperial Conference may be summoned and constituted accordingly.<sup>66</sup>"

At the same time was voiced the question of the reciprocity of treatment between India and the Self-governing Dominions concerning matters of emigration and visits of Indians within the Empire ----- India did not ask unrestricted rights of emigration and settlement within the various Dominions, but she did desire that her subjects be treated no less favorably than other Asiatics, and that the freest possible facilities be furnished to educated Indians for travel and study. She also asked that a kindly and sympathetic consideration be given those Indians already permitted to settle in the Dominions.

All the discussions which took place seemed to favor India's plea and Sir Joseph Ward especially emphasized his opinion that the representation of India at the Conference meant the accession to a very rapid development already taking place and pointing sharply to a future development in the direction of a greater solidarity. On the other hand General Smuts was cognizant of the existing, yet decreasing, trouble in South Africa between the Africans and the Indians which intolerance he felt to be accounted for in the fear entertained by the Africans



that if they open South Africa to another non-white race, the position of the few whites in South Africa would be dangerous. The Conference accepted the principle of reciprocity of treatment between India and the Dominions, and recommended favorable action thereon by the various Governments.

The matter of reciprocity of the treatment of Indians was considered by the Conference of 1918 in a Draft Resolution, prepared by Sir Satyendra Sinha, dealing with the emigration, visits, and recognition of Indian subjects within the Empire.<sup>67</sup> This draft was merely a reaffirmation of the principle of reciprocity as approved by Resolution 22 of the Imperial Conference of 1917,<sup>68</sup> and was unanimously carried.

The British Government had begun to realize the growing complexity of British relations in India and, with this understanding in view, commissioned Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu to thoroughly investigate the Indian situation. The famous Montagu-Chelmsford Report was available to the Home Government in 1918, and was placed before Parliament in 1919.

After carefully taking into consideration the opinion of all classes, Mr Montagu and Lord Chelmsford concluded that there was a sufficient number of educated Indians prepared to participate in the Government of their country to warrant fundamental changes in its structure. The Report as submitted to Parliament was a rough draft for a new constitution

---

67. Cd. 9177, 1918, page 195.

68. See above (66)





and formed the basis of the Government of India Act of 1919. The Government herein provided was simply to be a temporary plan to carry the Government of India over the transitional stage which is a necessary step in any attempted transformation from an autocracy to a democracy. What the new law sought to do was to create absolute freedom and responsibility for the Indians in their own field, but to limit the field.

The proposed reform was assailed from all sides; but the most vigorous protest came from the Indian Nationalists who asserted that it did not go far enough. This radical group found its leadership in the person of Mohandas Gandhi who, since 1919, has rather successfully thwarted and hindered the British program in India. The Mahatma<sup>69</sup> advocated the<sup>70</sup> doctrines of "swaraj," "swadeshi," and "satyagraha," and organized a group of followers to uphold these schemes against Britain. England saw the danger of any such crusade, and for that reason promptly arrested Gandhi.

The imprisonment of Gandhi incensed the radical section of the Indian populace, and discontent was manifested by popular demonstrations against British control and governmental policy. Violent outbreaks occurred at Delhi and at Amritsar, and British troops were dispatched to quell the disturbances. Owing to unfortunate circumstances of suppression, especially at Amritsar, England only became more involved because a certain

69. Mahatma is the name by which Gandhi became known in India.

70. Swaraj-Home Rule for India; Swadeshi- patronization of Home Industry; Satyagraha-non-cooperation with Great Britain.





impetus was afforded to the supporters of Gandhi who became more radical in their methods of protest in all fields of activity against the British Government. Most educated Indians say, "if India be, indeed, a lost Dominion it was lost at Amritsar"<sup>71</sup>

Gandhi faction continued to grow through the teaching and encouragement of this one man. Economically, religiously, and politically he opposed British plans in every way possible. He spoke very vigorously as to the discrimination against Indian immigrants. Nationalist favor was shown for home use of resources and encouragement of industries for Indian and not British profit. "If Indian settlers were subjects of his Britannic Majesty, which none denied, they were entitled to the same rights and privileges as were accorded to Englishmen"<sup>72</sup>

The Milner Commission of 1920 increased the bitterness of the Indian by recommending that, only two Indians should serve on the advisory council and that, other than the highlands sections which should be reserved for Whites, the principle of racial segregation should be adopted.

During 1921 the Mahatma was at the height of his power; but he was soon to fall from such heights of authority. Violent protestations took place in scattered sections of India, and Gandhi convened the First Indian National Congress in this very year. This Congress was planned as an

---

71. W.E.S. Holland, The Indian Outlook, page 54.

72. W.P. Hall, Empire to Commonwealth, page 346.



alternative to the British scheme for the Nationalists were out for "independence by a bloodless revolution." Great Britain, in despair, arrested the fanatic leader in 1922 and Gandhi, as well as his movement continued to loose power, for the time being at least owing to a continually increasing demand for immediate independence.

The question of the position of British Indians within the Empire received consideration in 1921 and was submitted to a special committee under the chairmanship of the Colonial Secretary. After deliberation upon the report as submitted by this committee, the Imperial Conference agreed that "there is an incongruity between the position of India as an equal member of the British Empire and the existence of disabilities upon British Indians lawfully domiciled in some parts of the Empire. The Conference accordingly is of the opinion \* \* \* \* that the rights of such Indians to citizenship should be recognized."<sup>73</sup>

The representatives of South Africa were unable to accept such a resolution in view of exceptional circumstances in that Dominion concerning the treatment of Indians therein. India in an endeavour to clarify the situation between the two countries, suggested a direct negotiation between Government and Government, which idea was received without undue enthusiasm on the part of South Africa.

---

73. Cmd.1474, 1921, page 34.





It was pointed out at the Imperial Conference of 1923 that India was assessed for a higher than any other member of the Empire except Great Britain, and consequently India felt that some relief should be afforded her by other parts of the Empire. Members of the Commonwealth expressed their sympathy but could not agree to any variation from the standard already adopted. Whereupon India intimated that she would reserve the right to raise the question at the 1924 League Assembly. Representatives Sapru and the Maharajah made a plea for the carrying out of the Resolution of 1921<sup>74</sup> by the appointment of a commission for negotiation between Government and Government; but General Smuts considered the trouble economic, and the Imperial Government refused to reconsider racial discrimination in Kenya. As for Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, no commissions were necessary for these Dominions were in full sympathy with India. The whole discussion simply showed that it was a mistake to suppose that Indians throughout the Empire were given an inferior status or that such disabilities as might be felt to exist were based on race or color. At the constitutional discussion of the Imperial Conference of 1926 India fared rather badly for the matter was raised that India was only admitted to the Imperial Conference in virtue of her economic importance and anticipation of future status of self-government. The difficulty was

---

74. See above footnote 73.



evaded by insisting that India's present status was determined by the Government of India Act of 1919 and the resolution passed in 1917.<sup>75</sup> India was excluded from the Constitutional Expert Committee, but her interests in shipping were recognized and respected and consequently she received due recognition as a member of the British Commonwealth particularly referred to when occasion demanded.

The Imperial Conference of 1930 again considered the question of status for India; but disagreement among the Dominion representatives as to a stated plan left India in a position similar to that which she held prior to the Conference.

The work of the Indian Round Table Conference<sup>76</sup> proved to be very successful even though no formal agreement was reached between Moslem and Hindu. Four rather important points were agreed upon by the Indian delegates:

(1) That there should be a new Constitution which would provide for India as a whole.

(2) That the Constitution should be Federal in nature, providing for a large measure of self-government.

(3) That responsibility of government should rest on the Indian Ministers.

(4) That there should be temporary safeguards, limitations, and reservations in the realms of foreign policy, defence and finance vested in the viceroy and his ministers.

---

<sup>75</sup>.Resolution 9. <sup>76</sup>. The Indian Round Table Conference sat for three months adjourning in Jan., 1931. There is no text available on this Conference.



These agreements simply meant an offer of Dominion status for India on similar lines to that enjoyed by Canada. But when Gandhi and his Nationalist followers learned of the news, they continued to demand complete independence and no less. Negotiations between Great Britain and India looked rather sceptical but recently Lord Irwin, the retiring viceroy, and Gandhi have conferred in an endeavor to bring about a satisfactory understanding.

Without doubt some compromise will ensue in the near future and India will remain a member of the British group. While independence is not absolutely impossible in the case of India it seems plausible to believe that she will accept Dominion Home Rule, provided that certain minor considerations can be worked out satisfactorily for both parties concerned.

#### F. Economic Policies

After the war the British Empire found itself confronted with the serious problems emigration and naturalization. The fortunes of war made the problem of overseas settlement especially acute owing to the social and economic readjustment which necessarily accompanies such a period of uncertainty and disorder. Some provision was necessary in order to encourage settlement within the less populated sections of the Empire for the relief of unemployment in the British Isles. The Imperial Government had already taken certain steps regarding





the establishment of a Central Emigration Authority to provide for such matters and the Dominions were intensely interested. Imperial Laws regarding naturalization were considered to be in need of drastic revision as to allowing enemy subjects to become naturalized. Closely connected with these two problems was the issue of the double income tax, one collected by the Imperial Government, and one by the Dominion Government wherein an industry was carried on. If the Imperial Government desired to encourage emigration, it must revise its existing tax laws so that a British subject migrating to Australia, for example, for the purpose of carrying on business therein would not be called upon to stand a levy both in Britain and in Australia.

## 2. Imperial Resources:

The British Government, as well as the Dominions fully realized the seriousness of the lack of Empire control of Empire resources. Experiences of war had brought this fact very forcibly before British statesmen, and the Imperial War Conference of 1917 upon suggestion from Sir Robert Borden, agreed that prompt attention and concerted action was quite necessary with regard to some provision for the production and transportation of an adequate food supply, for the control of natural resources, and for the economical utilization of such resources through processes of Empire manufacture.

77

\*



The Conference further resolved that certain preventive measures ought to be taken by the various Governments to control enemy importations in order to prevent dumping of enemy products within the Empire during the transition period after the war.<sup>78</sup> In the light of this resolve, the Conference expressed itself in favor of the creation of a permanent organization to develop Imperial resources and trade, but no definite action was taken thereon.

The Imperial War Conference of 1918 recommended that a committee be appointed for the purpose of effecting a control of Empire raw materials in favor of Empire interests, and of devising methods best suitable for carrying out such measures. However, no discussion upon this point was published at this time.<sup>79</sup>

The dye industry received careful consideration at this very time with the idea of establishing a dye industry in Great Britain so that England might be independent of any substantial need for German dyes after the war. The proposal was to place an embargo on all German dyes into Britain for a period of ten years after the war, thus preventing the importation of any foreign or German dyes into Great Britain. The difficulty arose as to the range of colors, the majority of which came from foreign sources, particularly German. But the object in bringing the matter before the Conference was to secure the cooperation and assistance of the Dominions in helping to establish an

---

78. Cd.8566, 1917, page 112.

79. Cd.9177, 1918, page 63.





independent dye industry. The Conference favored the Imperial proposal and recommended the common action of all the Dominions in cooperating with His Majesty's Government in order that such a plan might be effected as early as possible.<sup>80</sup>

The non-ferrous metal industry was next considered to secure such metals against foreign influence. At the beginning of the war almost complete control of the non-ferrous metals was in the hands of two or three German firms. Consequently, it was felt to be necessary to deal with the non-ferrous problem exclusive of ferrous metals to completely eradicate any German control in this industry. The system of license was favored, and the Non-ferrous Metals Industry Act of 1918 provides that everybody desiring to trade or deal in any way in non-ferrous metals must secure a license from the Board of Trade. Though the matter was opposed in some quarters as too narrow a policy for the Empire to agree to, the Conference passed a resolution approving the Non-ferrous Metal Industry Act of the United Kingdom with the recommendation that the Governments of the Empire adopt any necessary measure to carry out this policy.<sup>81</sup>

Effective legislation has been put into operation in many of the Dominions endeavoring to safeguard the control of Imperial resources, and hearty cooperation has been manifested against foreign influence therein. A very helpful impetus was afforded this entire matter in 1923 by the principle of Imperial Preference for Empire goods. And yet, obviously,

---

<sup>80</sup>.Cd. 9177.1918, page 103.

<sup>81</sup>---. ---. ---, -- 63.



there is much more to be desired before such a difficult problem can be successfully solved.

### 3. Imperial Research:

Owing to the fact that the matter of Imperial research is so closely linked with that of Imperial resources, let us consider the former as an aid toward a more extensive and effective control of Empire materials.

The Conference of 1917 expressed itself in favor of the establishment of an Imperial Mineral Resources Bureau in London for the purpose of collecting information from the Governments' departments regarding the mineral resources and metal requirements of the Empire, and advising at any time what action might best be taken for the further development of such resources. The resolution also advised that the Imperial Government take immediate action for the establishment of such a bureau.<sup>82</sup>

In accordance with the Resolution of 1917 Dr. Addison set up a Bureau in 1918. The matters placed before the Imperial War Conference of 1918 regarding the details of this Bureau were discussed under the headings:

(1) the number of representatives, (2) the financing of the body, and (3) the general machinery for carrying out such duties as were necessary. It was agreed to increase the number of members from four to six persons, and that the Bureau



be responsible to the Privy Council. The matter of finance was left open for future discussion. The Conference further suggested that a sub-committee be appointed to handle the technical details of the resolution pertaining to this matter as proposed by the Minister of Reconstruction. The committee, as appointed, offered its report which was accepted by the Conference.

At the same time that the question of an Imperial Mineral Resources Bureau was being debated by the Conference, a resolution was offered relative to the "establishment of an Imperial Bureau of Mycology to supplement the work of the Imperial Bureau of Entomology and to obtain necessary funds for its maintenance by suitable contributions from the Imperial Government, the Dominion Governments, and India, and other Overseas Possessions."<sup>83</sup> It was pointed out that the Bureau would have to do merely for fungoid diseases what the Bureau of Entomology had been doing for insect pests. The general aim was to collect information gained in research and experiment throughout the Empire and make it available for the entire Empire. The resolution won great favor among the Dominion delegates and received a unanimous vote.

The matter of research was rather neglected in 1921 because of the more important and more urgent problems which occupied the attention of the Imperial delegates at London. At the Conference of 1926 the question of research

---

83. Cd. 9177, 1918, Page 70.

The Memorandum states that one-tenth be shared by each, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and India, and five-tenths by the Mother Country.







was referred to a sub-committee which conducted various investigations for the improvement of such matters in the interests of Empire prosperity. The committee was deeply impressed with the profound value of the consultation and cooperation of all parts of the Empire regarding research, and methods for extending such cooperation so as to benefit all parts of the Empire.

As to general organization, it was recommended that from time to time special expert conferences be held to consider needs for establishing further scientific bureaux along the lines of the Imperial Bureaux of Entomology and Mycology; that official organizations in the Empire engaged in similar branches of scientific research be freely and directly inter-communicate; and that each part of the Empire nominate representatives to take part in quarterly standing conferences of the departments of research in Great Britain.<sup>84</sup>

Attention was drawn to the serious shortage of recruits for most branches of scientific services supported by the Governments within the Empire and the Conference decided that the basic remedy lay in the adoption of a settled policy regarding application of research to developments in the various parts of the Empire to ensure continuity and confidence in the work so that parents might feel it worth while to bear the expense of such training for their children. The Conference resolved its approval of such measures and referred the matter to the consideration of the respective governments.<sup>85</sup>

---

84. Cmd. 2768, 1926, page 48.

85. Cmd. 2768, page 49. The respective governments rendered reports at the Imperial Conference of 1930 but no material thereon is available.



The Conference endorsed the proposal for an Imperial Agricultural Research Conference in London in 1927 to consider such questions as an extension of cooperation between organizations promotion of joint programs of research,utilization of results obtained,and the training,supply,and interchange of scientific workers. This matter was also referred to the Dominion Governments for assent.

The delgates expressed hearty approval of the results of the work of the Bureaux of Entomology and Mycology, the Empire Cotton Growing Association,the Empire Marketing Board, and the Imperial Institute. A sub-committee was set up to consider forestry questions. The committee called attention to the rapidly decreasing amount of woods available for world supply and urged the seriousness of maintaining forest areas under management based on the sustained production of timber. The committee recommended an Empire Forestry Conference to be held in Australia and New Zealand in 1928 for the consideration of matters of forest policy,timber supply and consumption,forestry technique,further forestry research and the establishment of an Imperial Forestry Bureau to act as a clearing house for forestry information of all kinds.

The consequent resolution adopted by the Conference stressed the need for cooperation and approved the preliminary arrangements of Australia and New Zealand for the conference in 1928. Approval was also voiced of the invitation of South Africa



for a similar conference in that Dominion in 1933. The resolution also embodied the assent of the Conference to the establishment of an Empire Forestry Bureau.<sup>86</sup>

The question of encouragement of production and exhibition of Empire films within the Empire was referred, for detailed discussion, to the general economic sub-committee.

It was stated that in all parts of the Empire only a small portion of the films shown were of Empire production owing to the fact that few are produced and arrangements for the distribution of these were inadequate. Varying circumstances in different parts of the Empire were taken into consideration, but the opinion was expressed that any action which might be found necessary to be taken in Great Britain, the largest market for films in the Empire, would undoubtedly be of great assistance to the other sections as well.

It would be difficult to overrate the benefits which the Empire as a whole would derive from the establishment of such institutions provided that such bureau of information were effectively managed. Again, one can see the apparent complexity of such an undertaking owing to the vast extent of the Empire. But those bureaux which have already been set up have rendered a most valuable service to all sections, and have kept the Dominions in close contact with all important developments resulting from experiments in science.







#### 4. Imperial Preference:

In the light of war experience the Conference of 1917 felt certain steps to be essential in order to stimulate the production of Empire foodstuffs, raw materials, and manufactured articles. It was recommended that the Imperial Government adhere to preference for products and manufactures of the Dominions respecting present and future customs duties. The Conference also thought it desirable to establish a wider range of customs duties which would be either limited or reduced on Empire products<sup>87</sup>.

The principle of preference, while not actually put into operation, was nevertheless endorsed by Free Traders like Lord Balfour and Mr. Wardle, as well as by champions of the Tariff Reform, such as Mr. Hewins. The significant fact in the minds of ardent advocates of preference was that the doctrine had at least gained an important recognition, a point which was to become outstanding in future discussions of the same policy.

The essence of Imperial Preference, as practical in the Dominions, is the maintenance of an absolute control over tariff in the hands of the Government with power to manipulate freely in order to secure the protection of industry against foreign and domestic competition, differentiating in favor of foreign countries, though no foreign country was to enjoy the same terms as the United Kingdom. But complete tariff control is incompatible with any type of federal relation as a matter

---

87. Annual Register, 1917; page 68.



of actual practice, and consequently there appeared little tendency prior to 1923 to adduce preferential trade as an aid toward political consolidation, even though general approval was registered.

Again in 1918, the stand for Imperial preference was taken by Mr. Massey who stated that it would be advisable to lay down the principle that where supplies are required, if those supplies are obtainable within the Empire at reasonable terms-- those supplies should be obtained. He used, as an example, the meat trade, showing where Great Britain had gone outside of the Empire to import meat when Dominion store-houses were blocked with this product. On the contrary Mr. Ward offered a typical illustration of the rigid policy of New Zealand in the case of rails where, even though some German concerns offered lower bids, the Government of New Zealand gave the orders to British concerns to keep the trade within the Empire. A similar policy was stated by Mr. Burton in behalf of South Africa. But Mr. Massey strongly believed that each Government must act on its own judgment, making impossible the laying down of any hard and fast rule.

By far the chief decision recorded by the Conference of 1923 was that in favor of Imperial preference. At this Conference the argument was advanced that England should not maintain a policy of Free Trade for, in so doing, she is continually sacrificing the bond of tariff which should be used as



an economic bond of union for the British Empire as a means of accomplishing a vast saving for the Empire.

At the opening of the Conference Canada voiced the pride which she felt in the circumstance that she was the pioneer in granting preference to British goods. She explained that Canada was then giving a preference of thirty-three and one-third per cent on all goods coming in from Britain and the various parts of the Empire; also, at the last session of the Canadian Parliament prior to the Conference, additional ten-per-cent discount was to be allowed on existing duties on British goods coming through Canadian ports. Canada further pointed out that she anticipated an "all red" route and the removal of obstacles, by the British Government, to the importation of Canadian cattle in British markets.

The Economic Conference met simultaneously with the Imperial Conference, though it sat after the close of the Imperial Conference. The section of the report of this Conference dealing with preference sets out in final form the proposals made to the Imperial Conference by the British Government. It very extensive Imperial preferential scheme was worked out whereby the Dominions would lower the tariff on certain listed English manufactured goods at the same time putting high tariffs on those from other countries.







The text of the resolution on preference is as follows:

"This Imperial Economic Conference, holding that, especially in present circumstance all possible means should be taken to develop the resources of the Empire and trade between Empire countries, desires to reaffirm the resolution on the subject of Imperial preference passed by the Imperial War Conference of 1917.<sup>88</sup>"

The following is a complete list of the proposals which the British Government agreed to submit to parliament for approval:

(1) Dried fruit--now dutiable at 10s 6d per cwt. if of foreign origin; if of Empire origin, enjoy a preference of  $1/6$ , i.e. of 1s 9d per cwt. It is proposed to admit these free from the Empire so that Empire raisins, figs, and plums will enjoy a preference of 10s 6d per cwt.

(2) Currants--now dutiable at 2s per cwt; preference  $1/6$ .

Now the British Imperial Government is prepared to admit currants free and to see to the increase in duty on foreign currants to make preference effective.

(3) Other dried fruits--at present there is no duty on any other dried fruit; but while continuing to admit such Empire dried fruits free, His Majesty's Government would propose to

---

88. London Times, November 13, 1923, page 14.



impose a duty of 10s 6d per cwt. on foreign apples, pears and peaches, et cetera as the Dominion representatives may consider of interest to their trade.

(4) Other preserved fruits--preserved fruits, other than those mentioned above, not dutiable save in the respect of sugar content, if any. Proposal to impose an additional duty of 5s per cwt. except on fruit pulp for jam manufacture -- which is to remain free. All such fruit from Empire admitted free.

(5) Sugar -- dutiable according to polarization of sugar on the basic rate of 25s 8d per cwt. on fully refined sugar. Empire enjoys a preference 4s 3½d per cwt. While British Government unable to increase the preference, it guaranteed the same preference level for period of ten years if the duty should be reduced.

(6) Tobacco -- duty on cigars now 8s 2d per pound on which Empire enjoys a preference of 1/6. His Majesty's Government agreed to a preference increase from 1/6 to 1/4.

(7) Wine -- agreed to duty on foreign wines of 2s per gallon; and an increase of from 30 to 50 per cent preference on the surtax of 12s 6d per gallon on sparkling wine.

(8) Raw apples -- 5s per cwt. on raw apples of foreign origin; Empire apples duty free.

(9) Canned salmon and lobster-- duty of 10s per cwt. on products of foreign origin.



(10) Honey-- duty of 10s per cwt. on foreign honey.

(11) Fruit juices-- duty of 6d per gallon on lime and lemon juice of foreign origin. Empire fruit juices free.

The scheme also provided for England to levy a tax on foodstuffs, a provision which would take her away from her Free Trade Policy of 1846. England was to impose a duty on raw materials and food products, and levy a tax on certain manufactured goods produced in England as an aid to unemployment.

At the suggestion of the Imperial Conference the Cabinet set up an Empire Marketing Board which is a non-partisan organization, supported by the English Government, under the leadership of the Colonial Secretary. The purpose of this board is to stimulate the growth of the production and consumption of Empire goods. The organization aims to keep itself before the attention of the public by its advertising, its Empire dinners, and exhibitions of Empire products.. An English trade-mark has been instituted as a guarantee of quality to ensure purchasers that such goods are backed by the Government under the supervision of trained government staffs. "Eat Imperially" is the Empire slogan

The electoral campaigns of 1923 and 1924 were hard fought political undertakings. Labour figured strongly in the 1923 election. The Conservatives were criticized because they had failed to restore peace and tranquility. Baldwin held





to the Unionist Program as the only constructive policy before the country. Lloyd George and Asquith declared the Liberals to be united in their principle and held to the Free Trade idea. MacDonald criticized the Liberals and held that Labour had tried to bring reality back into politics. The turning point came with Imperial Preference, Labour came in on the side of the Liberals on this issue with whose cooperation Labour was put in power as a coalition party<sup>89a</sup> --- the second party of importance in England.

The Mac Donald Government held from February to October, 1924, and solved many political problems with success, But Britain feared Socialism, and when Mac Donald recognized the Russian Government the English people visualized the "Reds" as in control. The Mac Donald Ministry fell and the general election of 1924 brought back the Conservatives in an astounding majority,<sup>89b</sup> though Labour remained solid as the second political party in England.

At the Conference of 1926 the matter of Imperial preference was left much as it was in 1923 with the important exception that the delegates emphasized the point that the existing policy of Free Trade as recognized by the Imperial Government made it impossible to impose food taxes such as would appeal

---

89a Election of 1923a		-----	Conservatives	--259
			Liberals	----- 150
			Labour	----- 191
89b	----	- 1924b	-----	Conservatives ---- 410
				Liberals ----- 50
				Labour ----- 150



to Canada or Australia. One million pounds was voted by the Conference for the extension of the functions of the Empire Marketing Board to include the marketing of home produce. Thus was expressed the intrinsic value of inter-Imperial trade which never had been quite so emphatically recognized until the Dominions were really convinced that the opportunities of marketing British goods were not always used, and that people needed education in the matter through the medium of such expedients as Empire shopping week exhibitions, and other propaganda.

Imperial preference came up for discussion again at the Imperial Conference of 1930, but as yet no information is available for study. Mr. Richard Bennett, Canada's new premier, did propose at the beginning of the Conference that all members of the Empire surround themselves with a tariff wall within which preference--not free trade--should be provided to promote Empire business. Canada's specific proposal was that all British nations, Britain included, add ten per cent to the existing tariffs, or to tariffs to be created on imports from non-British nations.<sup>95</sup> The proposal won almost universal support in the other Dominions and marked a good beginning. What conclusions were reached will be divulged when the Government publications on the Conference are available.

---

95. Business Week Oct. 15, 1930, page 6.

This means a ten per cent increase in rates--for example: a foreign import tax of twenty per cent will hereby be increased to twenty-two per cent.





### 3. Double Income Tax

The matter of double income tax was introduced before the Conference of 1917 by Sir Robert Chalmers who presented the Imperial Treasury view of the income tax. He stated that the Government was pledged to inquire into the question of the income tax in Great Britain, but since the country is immersed in the war and the staff is hard pressed for money, it is impossible to conduct an inquiry until after the war is ended.

Dominion representatives considered this the psychological moment to deal with the question and suggested that just the matter of double income be inquired into now, without taking up the whole subject of taxation. It was also pointed out that since people ~~were~~ investing in the Dominions are taxed there and also in Great Britain the condition will only result in withdrawal of such investments. Mr. Borden showed where the foreign investments were not taxed and thus could successfully compete with British subjects who are subject to the double tax and for this reason are transferring part of their capital either to other parts of the Empire or even without the Empire -- to the United States especially. The opinion was that the tax was unjust and prejudicial to the best interests of the Empire because it forced Empire merchants outside the Empire for trading purposes. After an extended and detailed technical discussion, the following resolution was agreed to:

"The present system of Double Income Taxation within the Empire calls for a review in relation -----"



- (1) To firms in the United Kingdom doing business with Overseas Dominions, India, and the Colonies;
- (2) To private individuals resident in the United Kingdom who have capital invested elsewhere in the Empire, or who depend upon remittances from elsewhere within the Empire;
- (3) To its influence on investment of capital in the United Kingdom, the Dominions, and India, and to effect of any change on position of British capital invested abroad.

The Conference, therefore, urges that this matter be taken in hand immediately after the conclusion of the war, and that an amendment of law be made which will remedy the present unsatisfactory position!"<sup>90</sup>

At the Conference of 1918 the same desire for a review and revision of the present system of taxation prevailed. Mr. Bonar Law pointedly held the system to be unfair, yet just the one aspect of the problem, he said, cannot be dealt with without examining the whole basis, which investigation would be impossible owing to war conditions and to the fact that the Exchequer is in need of all possible revenue. Apparently there appeared three aspects to the question:



- (1) Encouragement of investment of British capital within the Empire;
- (2) Case where individuals from the Colonies or Dominions come to live in Great Britain;
- (3) Case of people investing simply as a good investment.

Mr. Law expressed the hope that the Conference would rest on last year's resolution, trusting to the British Government to make an investigation as soon as circumstances permit.

In general, this idea of Mr. Law's was supported by the Conference, but the representatives showed the strength of their desire to see the evil of double income investigated as the Dominions foresaw future detrimental results not only for the Dominions but for the Empire as a whole if preference was not established. No resolution was passed.

The matter of taxation was considered at the Imperial Conference of 1926 under the report of the General Economic Sub-Committee. Concerning the immunity of state enterprises from taxation, taxation of non-resident traders and valuation for customs duty purposes.

Nothing definite was accomplished on any one of these considerations even after lengthy discussion, except as to the acceptance of the report as a whole, leaving detailed discussion





for future consideration.

The Dominions, without doubt, realized the complexity of the double income tax problem as well as the serious consequences which, if not at present, are bound to arise in the future. The Governments desired to encourage Imperial Emigration and were willing to assist the project financially, and yet were unwilling to attempt to remove one of the greatest evils- the double income tax- which prevented materially the carrying out of such a program. Of course, a satisfactory revision would incur a very considerable cut in Imperial revenue; but undoubtedly, in the long run, the financial return to the entire Empire would amount far above such a government levy. Economically the life of the Empire is dependent upon her Imperial industries; and, if Empire merchants are driven outside of the Empire in search of markets where they can successfully compete with other countries, the Empire itself is sure to suffer to a very great extent, and foreign industrial and economic control is bound to prevail.

#### G. Other Imperial Questions

The experiences of war brought changes in Imperial matters other than those of Communication. The Dominion representatives were well aware of the fact that some provision for the care of soldiers' graves must be made by the Empire delegations as only fitting and proper tribute to those who had sacrificed their lives for the sake of the Empire. The matter of the development and control of natural resources and raw materials



needed consideration in order to safeguard such materials in favor<sup>of</sup> Empire interests. The question of Imperial Research received attention as a corollary to the necessary protection of Empire resources, and agreements were reached for the establishment of information bureaux in many of the major industries of the Empire. Then Imperial Preference was considered as a possible economic benefit to the Empire.

#### 1. Imperial War Graves Commission

A proposal of the Prince of Wales Commission for the care of Soldiers' Graves was placed before the Imperial War Conference of 1917 relative to the fact of establishing such a Commission to exercise the executive function of seeing that perpetual care be given to the graves of soldiers who lost their lives in their struggle for their country. The Conference was eagerly urged to accept the draft proposal in principle, and then to debate and amend any provision which were deemed necessary. The resolution as outlined in the draft was accepted by the Conference, empowering His Majesty to establish an Imperial War Graves Commission

Some minor discussion was recorded as to Mr. Massey's protest that Gallipoli was not specifically mentioned in that this area was to be regarded as entirely different from all others owing to the fact of its location in territory in possession of the enemy. Canada was of the opinion that if one theatre of the war was to be mentioned, all should be.





Especial appreciation was conveyed to France who had already agreed by law "to the allotment in perpetuity of the land in that country where British soldiers were buried," with the express hope that similar concessions be gained from Gallipoli, Mesopotamia, Africa, and all other theatres of war.<sup>91</sup>"

It was further agreed by the Conference "that the Imperial War Graves Commission" be requested, as soon as possible, "to submit an estimate of the probable cost to each part of the Empire together with their recommendation as to the proportion each should bear."<sup>92</sup> The number of the Commission was limited to nine<sup>93</sup> officials, as provided by the Constitution of the Commission, with an additional four which were not mentioned as to name, but were to include various experts who would be capable of rendering valuable advise to the Commission. Later four more members were added, making a final Commission of seventeen.

In 1918 General Ware submitted to the Conference an account of the work done by the War Graves Commission since the last Conference. India advanced the point of special treatment required for Indian cemeteries and graves because Mr. Sinha desired to be sure that India was being properly provided for<sup>94</sup> before he committed himself to the expenditure involved. The figures were roughly estimated at 10 pounds per man buried;

---

91. Cd. 8566, 1917, page 34.

92. Cd. 8566, 1917, pages 35--38.

93---Four from United Kingdom; five to be appointed by the Dominions.



but these figures were not to include isolated graves. Three cemeteries were reported as prepared, and work was expected to start immediately upon the Le Tréport. The Commission also reported its approach to the Turkish Government relative to a concession in Gallipoli, but, at that time, had made no effective progress. The Commission also deemed it wise to make no distinction in graves as to rank. The Conference voted its appreciation of the work of the Commission and designated itself in favor of making the respective Governments responsible for their share in the cost in proportion to the number of graves of their dead.<sup>95</sup>

Very satisfactory progress was shown by the Commission from 1918 to 1923 both in the matter of construction and in the acquisition of territory. It was further agreed by the Imperial Conference of 1923 that the powers of the Commission be extended so as to enable them to care for any place of burial or memorial, not included in the original charter, at the request of any Government, provided that such necessary expenditure be borne by the Government entering the request. This extension of authority afforded a much greater opportunity to the Commission to accomplish a broader and better service should such a demand be made by any of the respective Governments concerned.

---

94. The Indian custom is one of cremation

95. Cd. 9177, 1918, page 32.



# 1. Emigration

The matter of emigration was of especial interest to Canada because of the bill before Parliament providing for the establishment of a Central Emigration Authority to look after such matters. She expressed a desire to know the character and scope of the work to be done as she already possessed agencies doing the same thing. Another important issue for Canada was that of funds for the establishment of ex-service men in Overseas Dominions.

The Chairman of the Imperial War Conference of 1917 stated that the proposed Central Authority was to act under the direction of the Colonial Secretary, responsible to Parliament, but representative of all Overseas Dominions, as well as of the British Government, in advisory capacity only. He pointed out that, owing to the uncertainties of present conditions, it would be impossible to say definitely what the policy of the United Kingdom will be in regard to Empire settlement; but the object is to help emigrants to take advantage of generous offers to them by the Dominions. It was further stated that the clause in the bill before the House setting up the Central Authority was deliberately left in a vague manner to provide for post-war conditions.

There prevailed a general Imperial approval for closest cooperation and consultation between all parts of the Empire, but the question arose whether the function of the Dominion representatives should be advisory or executive. Canada,





especially, favored separate organizations among the Dominions to deal with emigration affairs. However, the matter was referred to a sub-committee for investigation. The report of the Committee, as submitted to the Conference, made clear Dominion willingness for cooperation, and the establishment, by the Home Government, of an act in the future to stabilize the situation in regard to emigration policies among the Dominions. It was urged that the Dominions revise their laws and work out practical proposals as suitable to their interests and circumstances.<sup>96</sup>

The project of Empire settlement received little practical aid before 1922 when the Empire Settlement Act of that year provided for an Annual sum of three million pounds to be available to meet emigration costs and to be allotted in a definite way. But the difficulty seemed to be to find Emigrants acceptable to the Dominions, who desired, and in many cases would admit, only skilled workers of the highest type. This negative attitude on the part of the Dominions made possible little expenditure, even though the actual money was available.

A special sub-committee reported again on overseas settlement at the Imperial Conference of 1926. It was obvious that mass settlement was forbidden for economic, social, and political reasons. All that could be hoped for was steady progress at the rate which the Dominions could absorb new settlers.



South Africa stated that, while she was anxious to increase her European settlement, owing to her large native population, it was necessary for settlers coming there to have a fair amount of capital in order to set themselves up. Note was taken of Canada's decision to establish in Great Britain a medical service for the free examination of prospective settlers and of the employment by Australia of permanent matrons to conduct unaccompanied women proceeding to Australia. The family settlement idea was emphasized and a desirability was expressed for the establishment of future training centers in Great Britain to provide instruction for those desiring to learn farming methods, domestic duties, et cetera, so that they might migrate to Australia or any of the Dominions. The project of social insurance schemes was favored and the suggestion made that plans be drawn to facilitate an interchange of teachers between Great Britain and the Dominions.

The Conference of 1926 heartily approved of the entire project and recommended Imperial cooperation to aid the Empire to redistribute its population so that relief might be afforded in certain over-populated areas, thereby providing security and opportunity to other sections of the realm.

Much valuable work has been accomplished in providing practical training in the various occupations, so as to fit subjects desiring to emigrate to the less crowded sections. The British Government has rendered a special aid in





providing finances in order that such persons might be in a position to go where opportunity offered a better livelihood.. In spite of all the efforts of Great Britain the Dominions are unwilling to take any except the best, and those are the ones who do not desire to emigrate. Consequently the process of readjustment is extremely slow.

## 2. Naturalization

The Dominion representatives at the Imperial War Conference of 1917 recorded themselves in favor of an amendment to and the extension of the legislation on naturalization previously passed by the Home Government. Opinion was unanimous on the subject because it was clearly pointed out that enemy subjects after the war would attempt to get back into the commercial and industrial position which they occupied prior to the war. British national laws were considered somewhat lax and Mr. Massey voiced his opinion that present enemy subjects should not be naturalized for a period of from five to seven years after the war. Sir Joseph Ward endorsed this idea and expressed the desire that the other Dominions would follow in the direction of drastic restrictions and policies. Mr. Chamberlain went a step further to urge not only the desirability of such a policy, but also the importance of securing uniformity of action in such a project. The Conference resolved "that the proposal as set forth in the memorandum from the Home Office be commended to the consideration<sup>97</sup>

---

97. Cd.8566, 1917, page 70. Extra appropriations for emigration were made at the Imperial Conference of 1930 on behalf of the British Imperial Government.



of the respective Governments".

At the Imperial War Conference of 1918 Mr. Massey moved a resolution "restricting, for a period after the war, the naturalization of citizens of present enemy countries," and disallowing them any political or economic rights. He spoke here of the German intrigues during the war and felt that such commercial and industrial supremacy must be fought against after the war. This general principle was agreed to, but the desire was expressed on the part of many of the Dominions of their preference to deal with their own situation as to the immigration and naturalization of Germans. The Home Secretary, Mr. Cane, suggested the appointment of a committee to report on the matter, but Mr. Massey desired a vote on his proposal. Canada refused to vote; South Africa was against it; but Australia, New Zealand, India, and Newfoundland voted in favor so the motion was carried. Consequently a resolution on nationality and naturalization was carried as follows: \* \* \* \* \* the Conference recommends that a special Conference \* \* \* be held at the earliest practicable date to examine and report in the light of Resolution 10, 1917, upon any question connected with nationality or naturalization which the Governments there represented may desire to raise or suggest which may be made for an amendment to the existing law."



Nothing of any importance was considered concerning the matter of naturalization at the Conference of 1921, but three important conclusions were arrived at in 1923 as a result of the report of the committee appointed to investigate such matters. The Committee decided to recommend that the power of granting certificates of Imperial Naturalization be extended so as to cover persons resident in "B" and "C" mandated territories and also in protectorates. It also concluded that if desired, and where needed, a Commission of Enquiry might be established in connection with the revocation of naturalization certificates. In regard to the determination of the nationality of married women, the Conference favored the existing law that the nationality of a married woman depends on that of her husband. But it was recommended "that power should be taken to re-admit a woman to British nationality in cases where the married state, though subsisting in law, has to all practical purposes come to an end." Concerning the matter of the validity of marriages between British subjects and foreigners, where they are valid in British law, yet in certain instances possibly invalid in the law of the foreign country concerned, the Committee had no recommendation to make and a resolution to this effect was accepted by the Conference.

In 1926 nationality questions were referred again to a Committee to investigate and report on, and the





Conference, on recommendation of this Committee, passed some valuable resolutions. The Conference of 1926 favored the revised draft nationality bill to give effect to the recommendations of Imperial Conference of 1923, subject to any inclusions recommended at the present Conference. It also recommended an amendment to the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act of 1914,"so as to provide facilities for the acquisition of British nationality by children of the third generation born abroad of British parents between August fourth, 1914 and August fourth 1922; and to make provision for further time for birth registration of children of the second generation born abroad of British parents.<sup>100</sup>

"It was further suggested that a modification take place in section 12 of principal act so as to allay any doubts which had arisen as to such matters. Further amendment was asked "so as to provide that a British subject by naturalization shall be under obligation to register annually at a British consulate while resident in a foreign country." The Conference also recommended an inclusion of power in the British Nationality Act whereby certificates of naturalization might be revoked in certain cases where it is deemed desirable.

The Committee was still unwilling to report definitely upon the nationality of married women and resolved to postpone consideration pending the Report of the Inter-Imperial

---

100. This facility meant registration of birth between these dates August 4, 1914 and August 4, 1922---the date when the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, 1922, came into operation.



Relations Committee under the heading of Dominion legislation in the light of the Colonial Laws Validity Act.

As to the matter of naturalization, it appears quite obvious that, in this field as well as in that of emigration, the Dominions are rather unwilling to commit themselves to any uniform Imperial policy, desiring, rather, to decide such conditions for themselves as individual cases arise.

### 3. Summary

In the foregoing pages appears a concise but inclusive discussion of Imperial Federation as evidenced within the British Empire in recent times.

The movement which was really responsible for such an outgrowth and appeared in rather definite form in the late nineteenth century, was that of the Colonial Conferences. This plan of consultation among the various sections of the Empire maintained noticeable regularity down to 1911 at which time there was witnessed a slight deviation from ordinary policy owing mainly to war preparations and war conditions.

When, in 1917, the matter was again set in operation, the British Government found itself confronted with entirely different group of possessions which had apparently developed certain very important reservations of authority which had become hardened into tradition during the intervening years.





The scheme of Empire consultation was again favored by a continuation, as it were, of the old pre-war Colonial Conference theory in the form of the Imperial Conference, an institution which is at present a basic factor for consideration concerning inter-Imperial relations of all kinds.

It is only upon the critical consideration of the discussions and resolutions of these periodic meetings between the Dominion delegates and the Home Government that one is able to obtain any clear insight into just what actually is the present status of the Dominions as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and exactly how relations are determined *inter se*.

#### 4. Conclusions

After a thorough survey of the Imperial policies of Empire as revealed by the discussions and decisions of the Imperial Conferences since the war, one cannot do other than pause for a moment to consider just what seems to be the present nature of the "British Commonwealth of Nations."

Though personal opinions as regards probable trends of action within the Empire are possible, actual statements which would attempt to define future relationships between the members of the Commonwealth would be quite absurd.

At present the general tendency seems to be averse to the adoption of any definite constitution for the Empire as a whole; but a written constitution, though not impossible does not



appear as a plausible or even probable solution at the present time.

Because Great Britain is a world power and essentially a European nation, it may be safely asserted that the Imperial Government in London is more concerned with peace and cooperation than with precise Dominion relationships. Even though each Dominion is "free" so long as sentiment for Empire is strong and conflicting interests do not oppose it, the Empire is likely to remain as such. The real bond is that of tradition and sentiment; the evolution of self-government has brought the Dominions to a condition of full constitutional independence by means of a continuous process which may be expected to continue. Cooperation in all matters is essential, and the Imperial Conference now serves as the most useful method of such cooperation, though, I think we will agree, its ultimate success is fundamentally dependent upon the ordinary work of the Governments composing it.

The Imperial Conferences have disclosed their interest in the matter of Imperial communication as a whole. It is felt that only through greatly improved forms of Imperial communication can the necessary Imperial cooperation be hoped for. Although most of the constructive work accomplished has been supported, for the most part, financially, at least, by the British Government, Dominion interest has been apparent in the



majority of cases. Wireless and air routes now connect the most remote sections of the Empire; Dominion statistics are available to the entire Empire group; Imperial news is dispatched daily from the various Dominions; and even in matters of Imperial defence may one witness some cooperation on the part of the Dominions with the Home Government, though the Government at London still continues to bear the burden in such matters. Each of the Dominions decides whether or no it shall support Great Britain in any war, and if so, to what extent. Each decides for itself whether or not to sign any treaty. Each may have its own military or naval establishment. Since 1926 the Dominions are free to negotiate separate treaties, though, in practice, 10 Downing Street is consulted before any signatures are attached thereto. Ireland and Canada exchange their own ministers with several countries.

These facts only disclose how independent the Dominions really are as to their own matters in even the most critical and important fields.

At the present moment there appear to be three seats of disturbance within the Empire wherein Great Britain is justly concerned ---- Ireland, Egypt, and India.

Although nationalism still continues to entertain sufficient support in Ireland to cause frequent more or less violent outbreaks, there seem to be readjustments of circumstances





taking place now and then which in time will establish a satisfactory compromise between the adherents of the Irish Free State and those who stand for complete independence. The Irish Free State is too dependent economically for trade and defence upon England to ever gain complete independent rule outside of the British Empire.

The relations between the British Government and India are reaching a crisis in which Britain will have to take a definite stand in the very near future. Recent violent outbreaks in various sections of India manifest that the spirit of nationalism is still alive. But while Gandhi is, without doubt, a disturbing element in Anglo-Indian relations, he alone can never sufficiently unite the vast and scattered mass of Indian population with a view toward carrying out in full his policy of passive resistance through the means of non-cooperation.

On the other hand Great Britain cannot hope to utterly suppress India economically for very much longer. Indian economic interests must inevitably advance along with her political demands, and further concessions, as heretofore, will, in time, have to be granted by Great Britain.

I am inclined to believe that as long as the Indian Civil Service remains, India will be subject to the rule of Parliament. This steel frame of Indian Government is too far-reaching and too efficient for any radical nationalists to



break down. The Indian Nationalist Party is in the minority among the more educated Indians, for the great majority of them favor the Dominion form self-government within the Empire realizing that, under British rule, they enjoy many privileges and concessions which would be denied them under any independent government.

The Imperial Conferences have set up some very definite policies with regard to economic conditions. The tie which binds the British Empire is an economic bond, and Britain is well aware of the fact that her very existence depends upon her keeping her Empire. British trade depends upon her imports of raw materials from her Dominions and home manufacture of these materials into goods which she can sell in competitive foreign markets. England has to import nearly all her food, another reason why she depends upon her Dominions.

Britain realizes her economic dependence upon the portions of her Empire and this realization disclosed itself innumerable times at the meetings of the Imperial Conferences in her keen interest concerning economic Imperial decisions as to resources, research, preference, emigration and naturalization policies. England always holds herself ready to heartily cooperate with the Dominions in making it possible in any way she can to carry out such plans.

The establishment of central bureaux to care for emigration, forestry, and resources, has greatly benefited England





as well as the Dominions by providing information on such subjects which is available at all times. Imperial preference met with little favor, though the Dominions did agree that it would be beneficial to the Empire to trade within the Commonwealth, provided materials desired were available, and that prices be made especially attractive to Empire members.

It seems apparent that Britain is ever desirous of further cooperating with her Dominions in order that Empire ties may be strengthened. I believe that England is attempting, through the medium of the Imperial Conference, to counter-balance the rising spirit for national independence in the Dominions. When Britain lost her American Colonies in 1783, she surrendered the hope of her future Empire, economically. Since that time England herself has experienced several political transformations toward liberalism and liberal legislation which have deeply influenced every nation in the Commonwealth. An Empire such as that of the British Nations must, from necessity, look for the maintenance of its existence upon democratic principles. British statesmen have been catering to that end especially since the war and, in so doing, have created a new British Empire and a new Britain.

Recent developments, since 1926, have tended to throw much light upon the major issues considered in this survey;



but, unfortunately, at the time of writing such documentary material is not available for study. Also in many instances deliberations are still in progress. Consequently up-to-date conclusions are out of the question, as well as beyond the intended scope of this thesis, on such matters as, Indian status, Imperial preference, Imperial defence and communication.

---



## Bibliography

Hall, W.P.

From Empire to Commonwealth

Henry Holt, 1928  
Chapters 8, 9, 11, and 13

A very authoritative source of  
information; scholarly and interesting  
in comment; pure fact presentation;  
optimistic in outlook.

Keith, A.B.

Dominion Home Rule in Practice

Oxford Press, 1921

Chapter 1  
Very technical and scholarly;  
valuable in fact material. Tory in  
point of view.

Keith, A.B.

Responsible Government in the Dominions

Oxford Clarendon Press, 1928

Volumes 1 and 2

Both of these volumes are technical;  
valuable in facts disclosed and very scholarly  
in style; an inexhaustive research on the subject  
of responsible government; very conservative.

Nathan, M.

Empire Government

Harvard University Press, Boston, 1929.  
Most readable owing to the personal opinions  
expressed.





Robinson, H.

Development of the British Empire

Houghton, Mifflin, N.Y., 1922

A most readable volume of Empire history;  
rich in narrative and research.

Zimmern, A.E.

The Third British Empire

Oxford Press, 1926

A rather opinionated piece of writing; very  
easy reading; pleasing style; liberal in  
point of view.

Annual Register

London, 1917-1926

Government Bulletins  
Cd. 8566

Proceedings and Papers, London, 1917

Cd. 9177

Proceedings and Papers, London, 1918

Cmd. 1474

Summary of Proceedings and Documents,  
London, 1921

Cmd. 1937  
-- 1938

Summary of Proceedings and appendices,  
London, 1923

Cmd. 2768  
-- .2769

Summary of Proceedings and appendices,  
London, 1926

Hall, H.D.

The British Commonwealth of Nations



Lowell, A.L.

World Peace Foundation, Boston, 1927

Howland, W.E.S.

The Indian Outlook

London Times

Editorials, 1917--1926

Business Week

McGraw--Hill, October, 1930

---





BOSTON UNIVERSITY



1 1719 02574 9559

